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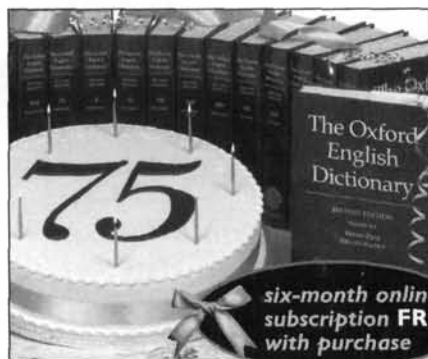
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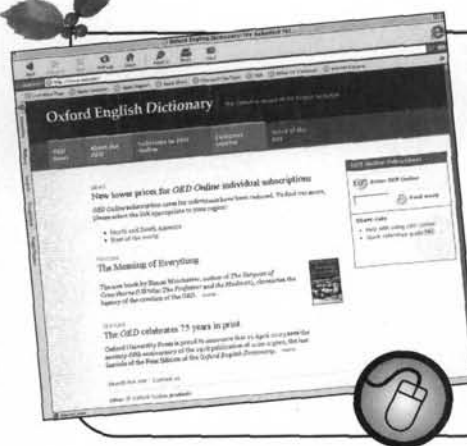
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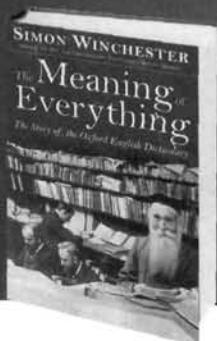
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Then and Now

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letters to the editor

ARGUING FDR

Forrest McDonald, in his review ("A Flawed Colossus," Nov. 24) of my book about Franklin D. Roosevelt, accuses me of a number of inaccuracies of which I am, in fact, innocent, such as the astounding falsehood that I wrote that Russia had "clobbered" Japan in the Russo-Japanese War. Those who might otherwise take Professor McDonald's opinion of my book seriously should note his belief that the economy of the United States in 1937 "was as bad as it had been in 1933." Unemployment fell in that time from 33 percent to 12 percent (and only 4 percent if the workfare-project participants are included as employed). The collapsed banking system was rebuilt, and the federal government refinanced the residential mortgages of approximately one quarter of the population. Professor McDonald believes that the Western Allies would have done better to invade Central Europe through the so-called Ljubljana Gap (which isn't much of a gap and led to nowhere of geopolitical interest), rather than invading Normandy. Best of all, he asserts that the Americans captured Mussolini before his rescue by the Germans in 1943.

Professor McDonald's comments on the New Deal and Yalta make it clear that his main objection to my admittedly extensive recitation of facts is that he doesn't wish to be confused by them. A nasty and pedantic review from such a critic is encouraging.

Conrad Black
New York, N.Y.

IT'S MY (HALLOWEEN) PARTY . . .

The last thing I thought I'd be writing to NATIONAL REVIEW about is Halloween, but then I never expected to read an article like Meghan Cox Gurdon's ("The Horror, the Horror," Nov. 10) in NR. Why is it a problem that Halloween has become so involved?

The author says it's because the holi-

day isn't about anything; I beg to differ. For 15 years I have hosted an annual Halloween party. Each year it has been about enjoying an evening of revelry with our friends, coworkers, and family. Yes, we set up a graveyard and a spook alley. We don costumes, project ghosts onto the house, and string spider webs. We light a bonfire and enjoy good company. Gurdon is correct—Halloween is "completely content-free and dark-caped"—but it feels great to be at least content-free one day out of 365! The rest of the year we are responsibly working, raising children, and writing our congressmen. Come to think of it, we're even doing our part by throwing a party: The money we spend stimulates the economy.

So what if this holiday is only about having fun? Is that childish? No, but whining about Halloween is.

Vida McEndollar
Fenton, Mo.

MY IDEALS, RIGHT OR WRONG

Victor Davis Hanson ("Loyalty, How Quaint," Nov. 24) was correct: Too often over the past 50 years, liberals have supported leftist dictators such as Mao or Stalin, but so too have many conservatives rationalized brutal regimes. While loyalty to the nation is important, so too is the nation's loyalty to its ideals. Opposition to policies that discourage—or are perceived to discourage—these ideals is not unpatriotic. But try telling this to the Right: After all, liberals didn't coin "love it or leave it" or "my country right or wrong." Frankly, I can think of no two statements more opposed to the principles of freedom and authentic patriotism. I am proud to be an American, but that does not mean I am a puppet for the government of the day, be it Republican or Democratic.

Jerome McCollom
West Milwaukee, Wis.



Why Manufacturing Matters

The United States is losing its manufacturing capacity. These losses are reaching a tipping point, where even greater losses, coming even faster are possible.

Already, the U.S. will import almost \$400 billion more goods this year than it exports, by that creating a major drag on future U.S. economic growth.

Another result is that the U.S. has lost 2.7 million good-paying manufacturing jobs since the summer of 2000. The majority of these displaced workers are ending up in jobs that have few benefits and less pay. Many of these people cannot find work anywhere, at any wage.

Beyond trade and jobs, manufacturing matters to America for other vital reasons. Manufacturing growth, for instance, spawns more additional expansion than any other economic sector. Each \$1 of final manufacturing output creates another \$1.43 in related manufacturing and business services such as finance, construction, and transportation.

The reverse, of course, is also true. A decline in manufacturing results in a contraction in those related activities.

Manufacturing matters because U.S.-based manufacturers are responsible for two-thirds of all private Research and Development done in the United States. This R&D ripples through the economy as innovations that lead to new products, new production, and new jobs. But when manufacturers move their factories offshore, most companies also move their R&D, as well. For example, dozens of U.S. companies that have shifted their factories to China are now relocating their R&D there.

Manufacturing matters for it provides a fifth or

more of the total gross product of states such as the Carolinas. Replacing the income produced by manufacturing would require states such as California to create \$165 billion of new economic activity annually. New York would have to create \$77 billion and Texas \$93 billion.

The manufacturing base of those and other states were created over the past two centuries. Replacing such large economic contributors overnight, even over a decade, is virtually impossible.

Manufacturing also matters to America because manufacturers pay 30-40 percent of all corporate taxes collected by the federal, state, and local governments. The current decline in state and local revenues throughout the United States can be traced largely to the concurrent decline of U.S. manufacturing.

In sum, manufacturing matters to the people of the United States for it helps produce the taxes we pay, the jobs we need, the goods we consume, and the weapons we use for our national defense.

We think manufacturing in America matters. What do you think?



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"Ten Commandments, eh?—If I know these jokers, you'd better carve them in stone."

■ In *Newsweek* poll, President **Bush** earns 52 percent approval rating. . . . Bush on Iraq casualties: "We mourn every loss. We honor every name. We grieve with every family. And we will always be grateful that liberty has found such brave defenders." . . . More Bush: "Sixty years of Western nations' excusing and accommodating the lack of freedom in the Middle East did nothing to make us safe—because in the long run, stability cannot be purchased at the expense of liberty." . . . In NBC/*Wall Street Journal* poll, 63 percent support U.S. military action removing **Saddam Hussein** from power. . . . Gov. **Bill Owens** (R., Colo.), on BBC: "I think terrorism is weaker than ever before. We're better off today than before September 11." . . . Federal spending rises nearly 9 percent in 2003, with discretionary spending up 12.5 percent. . . . "The most interesting thing is, Bush has not vetoed anything, let alone a spending program," says former Republican director of Congressional Budget Office **Rudolph G. Penner**, in *Washington Post*. "One wonders how serious the White House is about holding the line."

■ Sen. **Jay Rockefeller** (D., W.Va.) on Democratic memo announcing plans to play politics on Senate intelligence committee, on MSNBC: "The memo is not a memo. The memo is

just an option thing which staff prepared for me." . . . Sen. **Kit Bond** (R., Mo.) on Rockefeller's "option thing," on CNN: "Nobody's been fired for putting forward this blatant political effort. And this undermines the ability to do our job on a bipartisan basis to make sure we get the best intelligence available." . . . Sen. **Zell Miller** (D., Ga.) on same, on Fox News: "I think heads should roll. We're in war. You don't aid and abet the enemy. You don't inhibit or compromise intelligence at a time like this." . . . **Al Gore** on Bush administration: "They have taken us much farther down the road toward an intrusive, Big Brother-style government—toward the dangers prophesied by **George Orwell** in his book *1984*—than anyone ever thought would be possible in the United States of America." . . . **Jimmy Carter** on Guantánamo detainees, in *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*: "This is a violation of the basic character of my country, and it's very disturbing to me." . . . **Ralph Nader**, according to Associated Press: "I think the Democrats can be fairly charged with chronic whining, and they ought to look at *themselves* first and foremost."

■ Rep. **Dick Gephardt** (D., Mo.) pulls ahead of **Howard Dean** in *Des Moines Register* poll of Democrats, 27 percent to 20 percent, with Sen. **John Kerry** (D., Mass.) in third place (15 percent) and all other candidates in single digits. . . . Dean and Kerry forgo public funds for their primary campaigns. . . . Dean is endorsed by Service Employees International Union and American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. . . . Gov. **Ed Rendell** (D., Pa.) on Dean, in *New York Times*: "He's the only Democrat who can keep pace with Bush financially. . . . He has the potential to be our strongest candidate." . . . Rep. **Dennis Kucinich** (D., Ohio), in *Des Moines Register*: "Some people are starting to say they like the fact that I'm a long shot, and that's why they're backing me." . . . **Wesley**

Clark calling war against Serbia "technically illegal" in *New Yorker*, adds: "The Russians and the Chinese said they would both veto it. There was never a chance that it would be authorized." . . . More Clark, on Bush administration: "They still haven't found **Osama bin Laden**. And every day, Americans live at risk because of this failure."

■ Former House majority leader **Dick Armey** (R., Texas) on liberal Republicans, according to *Tallahassee Democrat*: "the bed-wetter caucus." . . . More Armey: "Scaredy-cat Republicans, when they desert the field of battle, taking flight over their own fears or their own insecurities, always do so while denouncing their own generals as they flee." . . . In Quinnipiac University poll, only 41 percent of New Yorkers say they want Gov. **George Pataki** (R.) reelected in 2006. . . . HUD secretary **Mel Martinez** reconsiders decision not to run for Senate in Florida, reports *Tampa Tribune*. . . . Rep. **Mark Souder** (R., Ind.) introduces bill to put **Ronald Reagan** on dime. . . . President Bush awards **Midge Decter** the National Medal for the Humanities.

■ "Our determination must be the same as that of the Italians in uniform who have brought honor to themselves and to the coalition that is committed to supporting Iraq's journey toward democracy," says Italian prime minister **Silvio Berlusconi** after fatal bombing in Nasiriyah. "No intimidation will budge us from our willingness to help that country rise up again." . . . Iran says it will quit developing Shahab-4 missile capable of delivering warhead to Europe. . . . Chinese manufacturer of cheap suits offers **Bill Clinton** \$2 million to become company spokesman.

■ **Jay Leno**: "Mexico's president **Vicente Fox** was in Phoenix, Arizona, giving a speech where he told Americans it's time to reform immigration laws and make it easier for his people to legally cross the border. Easier? What does he want—moving sidewalks?" **NR**

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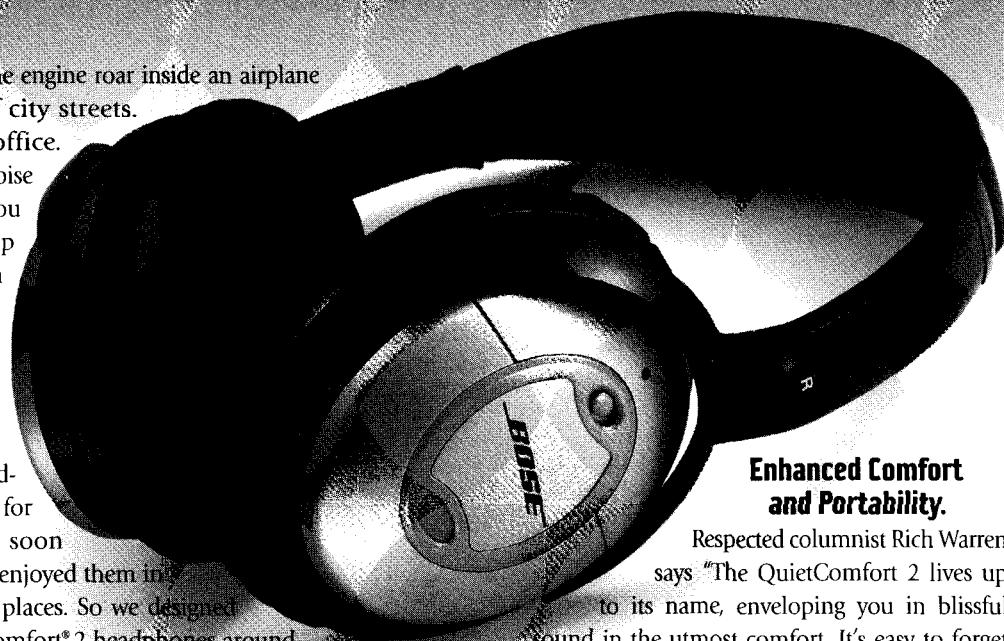
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—Dean Rieck,
Direct Marketing magazine
April 2000

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The School of Athens, detail, by Raphael, c.1508-11, Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace.

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THE WEEK

■ A dodgy John Edwards says “I personally do not support” gay marriage. If he means that phrase as it is used in the abortion debate, he appears to be saying that he would not himself enter a gay marriage. Profile in courage!

■ Sen. Ted Kennedy says that he opposes the Medicare bill now taking final form in Congress because it appears “to tilt in favor of the right-wing agenda.” He can’t possibly mean that adding a prescription-drug benefit to Medicare coverage is a victory for the limited-government caucus. In what is surely a hopeful forecast—i.e., one that downplays the true costs—the Congressional Budget Office reports that the bill would boost federal spending by \$400 billion over the next decade. Already supported by the Bush administration, the plan won the AARP’s backing on November 17. This probably creates a legislative juggernaut, even though the original version passed the House by only a single vote. In one small piece of good news, the bill offers tax incentives to create medical savings accounts that combine high-deductible insurance with a plan that resembles IRAs. Although these incentives are small in this bill, they point the way toward a long-term solution to exploding health costs. It’s the bright spot in an otherwise dismal milieu.

■ President Bush goes to London, and the streets fill with angry Brits. We have been here before. “London was altogether beside itself on one point . . . it created a nightmare of its own, and gave it the shape of Abraham Lincoln. Behind this it placed another demon, if possible more devilish, and called it Mr. Seward [William Seward, Secretary of State]. In regard to these two men, English society seemed demented. . . . Mr. Lincoln’s brutality and Seward’s ferocity became a dogma of popular faith.” (Henry Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams*, writing about London during the Civil War.) Note especially Adams’s conclusion: “. . . all London society . . . needed the nervous relief of expressing emotion; for if Mr. Lincoln were not what they said he was—what were they?” If Lincoln was not a nightmare, then they were supporters of slavery and treason. If Bush is not a monster, then British anti-warriors are supporters of dictatorship and mass murder. No wonder they were so excited.

■ The terror-bombing of the Riyadh housing complex that killed 18 people, all Muslims, is not quite like the death of Leon Trotsky. It was terrible that Trotsky should have been murdered in such a grisly fashion—yet he was as bloodthirsty and ignorant as Stalin, and hence no loss. The difference in the Riyadh case is that the victims were ordinary civilians. Nevertheless, Saudi Arabia’s rulers have an opportunity, if they can tear themselves away from their indulgences, to con-

template first-hand what they have wrought over so many years. Perhaps self-interest will compel them to change in ways that decency is powerless to do.

■ Car-bombs, possibly set by al-Qaeda, exploded outside two Istanbul synagogues, killing 24 people and wounding scores more. The murders remind us of several things. Jihadism is grossly anti-Semitic. Istanbul’s Jews, who have been there since 1492, have nothing to do with the Iraq war or with the State of Israel. For all that, most of the dead and wounded were Muslim neighbors and passersby. This is no loss to the bombers, who hate non-fanatical Muslims as much as they hate infidels. Turkey, a secular state, is a particular object of their ire. A jihadist e-mail promised that “cars of death” will strike “the capital of this era’s tyrant, America.” So they will be back. But clearly they have suffered from the strikes we have administered. “Cars of death” has a tinny sound. Rage on. We will find you.

■ A truck bomb in the city of Nasiriyah in southern Iraq exploded outside the headquarters of Italian military police stationed there, killing twelve *carabinieri*, five soldiers, two civilians, and thirteen Iraqis. Prime minister Silvio Berlusconi expressed “deep pain for lives cut short . . . during a mission of humanity and freedom,” and said that “Italians in uniform” would continue helping “with honor . . . the coalition that is working to sustain Iraq.” We share Italy’s pain, salute its honor, and renew our commitment to these goals.

■ The story of Pfc. Jessica Lynch has spun into political/media hyperspace, where the Pentagon meets the E! Channel meets Barnes & Noble. Even Larry Flynt has scrambled aboard, saying that he has topless pictures of Miss Lynch, which he will not publish because—oh, who cares what he says. Jessica Lynch appears to be a normal young woman whose ordeal was seized on by feminists and Pentagon flacks (some of them the same people), who wanted a combination of *Saving Private Ryan* and *Courage Under Fire*. Wars are about achieving objectives, not rescuing prisoners, important though that is to comradesly morale. Not important at all is awarding brownie points on the basis of ethnicity or sex. The disproportionate coverage, so much of it grotesque, that Private Lynch has received is one more proof that women do not belong on the battlefield.

■ News accounts have played the Supreme Court’s decision to consider whether U.S. courts have jurisdiction over Guantanamo Bay as a setback to the Bush administration’s position that the courts have nothing to do with it. “An unmis-

Shine the Light of Liberty in Russia as Well

**Michael McFaul is the
Peter and Helen Bing
Senior Fellow at the
Hoover Institution and an
associate professor of
political science at
Stanford University**

In a recent speech to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the National Endowment of Democracy (NED), President George W. Bush made a compelling case for the United States continuing to engage in promoting democracy worldwide. In a speech of strategic vision that both Ronald Reagan and Woodrow Wilson would have been proud to deliver, Bush stated that "the advance of freedom is the calling of our time; it is the calling of our country." He asserted that "liberty is the design of nature; we believe that liberty is the direction of history... and freedom—the freedom we prize—is not for us alone, it is the right and capacity of all mankind."

In the speech, Bush also discussed countries such as Cuba, Burma, Zimbabwe, and China where "our commitment to democracy is tested." Missing from his list was Russia.

This omission is a mistake. Russia is not a dictatorship. But **the drift back toward autocracy under President Vladimir Putin can no longer be ignored.**

The recent arrest of Russian oil tycoon Mikhail Khodorkovsky is the latest evidence of democratic backsliding. To be sure, Khodorkovsky is no champion of democracy. He did not spend his youth campaigning for freedom of speech and has done nothing to stop the Russian wars in Chechnya. Rather, he is a businessman who made his money in the same corrupt way that every person in business did in the anarchic years of the 1990s. Nonetheless, his arrest was not the application of the rule of law but only the service of political ends. Khodorkovsky, an independent economic actor with political ambitions, threatened Putin's control of the Russian

political system. In removing Khodorkovsky, Putin purged his administration of those officials hired originally by Boris Yeltsin—eliminating another pocket of political power.

Khodorkovsky's arrest is only the latest chapter in Putin's campaign to remove checks on his power. Since becoming president in 2000, Putin has chased away other oligarchs, seized control of national television networks, emasculated the power of the Federal Council (Russia's equivalent of the U.S. Senate), and tamed barons who once served as a balance to Yeltsin's presidential rule. And the ruthless way in which his army has conducted the war in Chechnya should leave little doubt about Putin's attitude toward human rights. Putin believes that he is on a mission to clean up the Yeltsin-era mess and create a new and powerful Russia state. If democratic attributes of the regime must be sacrificed to achieve this goal, then so be it.

President Bush may not have the power to reverse these trends. But he must make clear which side of the fence the American people are on. In reflecting on the cold war era in Europe and Asia in his NED speech, Bush stated that "we provided inspiration for the oppressed. In prison camps, in banned union meetings, in clandestine churches, men and women knew that the whole world was not sharing their own nightmare. They knew of at least one place—a bright and hopeful land—where freedom was valued and secure. And they prayed that America would not forget them, or forget the mission to promote liberty around the world." The democrats in Russia are still praying that we do not forget them or abandon our mission to promote liberty *everywhere* in the world, including Russia.

—Michael McFaul

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.



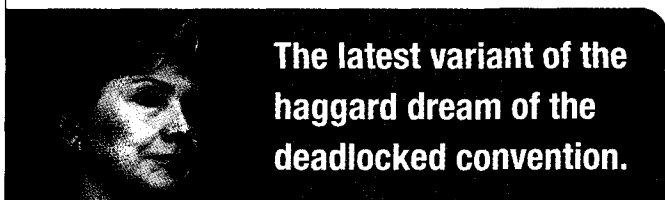
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THE WEEK...

takable rebuff," according to the *New York Times*. This is wishful thinking. It is possible the Supreme Court will, on the narrow question before it, decide that the U.S. courts have jurisdiction over Gitmo, land controlled by the United States. But this will make little difference when it comes to the more important question of whether the administration is right to hold detainees there without charge and without lawyers. It clearly is. The detainees have committed no crime and are charged with none. Their "only" offense is waging a war against the United States, and so they can be held until the end of the war as captured enemy troops have from time immemorial. U.S. courts have recognized going back to the Civil War that the courts can no more review a battlefield detention by the commander-in-chief than they can, say, overturn his decision to invade Iraq. It doesn't matter if the detainees are held on U.S. soil. As the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals wrote in a January decision upholding the detention of Yasser Hamdi—a U.S. citizen captured with the Taliban and held in the U.S.—the judicial review of such detentions would risk "saddling military decision-making with the panoply of encumbrances associated with civil litigation." That, of course, is exactly what Bush critics want, and it would be a severe blow to the War on Terror if they got their way.

■ Steel tariffs have cost Americans more jobs than they've protected, but the White House has gambled all along that they will provide a political boost in swing states like Pennsylvania and West Virginia, and guarantee the president four more years of gainful employment. Now, however, the



The latest variant of the haggard dream of the deadlocked convention.

Hillary in '04? *Newsweek's* Howard Fineman lays out the "scenario" of a "hard-boiled insider": If no Democrat has a majority of convention delegates by May or June, then Hillary steps in as "healer and unifier." Not to disappoint Clinton fans among the readership, but this is only the latest variant of the haggard dream of the deadlocked convention. Harkening to the convention coverage of H. L. Mencken, journalists long for dramatic, smoke-filled, power-brokered endgames. But they don't happen anymore. The length and density of the primary season, and the mob psychology that infects it, means that by May or June—usually earlier, certainly by convention time—there is already a winner. Mrs. Clinton, whose career so far shows more shrewdness and caution than we would like, is waiting for '08.

WTO has determined (correctly) that the tariffs aren't permissible under international trade rules, clearing the way for the EU to slap its own fees on more than \$2 billion in American exports. What's more, the EU has released a list of possible targets, such as citrus grown in Florida and motorcycles assembled in Wisconsin. The EU has been frank about its method of selection: It plans to hurt Bush in states he can't well afford to lose next year. That's almost an in-kind contribution to the Democratic party. Bush shouldn't let the EU get away with it, and he won't, if he confronts the reality that his tariffs are a drag on the economy and therefore politically harmful to him everywhere.

■ The case of Roy Moore, chief justice of the Alabama supreme court—or rather, now former chief justice—has been a painful saga. Judge Moore had displayed the Ten Commandments in his court building. A federal judge said he had to remove them, because of the First Amendment. An appeals court upheld that depressing ruling, and the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear an appeal of *that*. Judge Moore refused to obey, so the State of Alabama's Court of the Judiciary removed him from his post. The judge has vowed a national cultural-legal campaign. We wish him luck, but this magazine has said that, though he was right on the substance of his case, he was wrong to disobey the higher court rulings. One task now is to remind the public how extreme and eccentric the rulings against him were. As the *New York Sun* pointed out, the Supreme Court building itself—the one in Washington—has a frieze depicting the Mosaic tablets. Should it be dynamited? Also, Justice Robert Jackson deliberately chose a courtroom containing the Ten Commandments in which to hold the Nuremberg trials. Yes, to work for an America that remembers truths about its Constitution and our heritage is a heavy responsibility, falling to all of us.

■ On the surface, the GOP's Senate filibuster—or "reverse filibuster," as Rick Santorum called it—was something of a bust: When it started, the Democrats had successfully blocked four of Bush's nominees to the federal appeals court; when it ended, 40 hours later, that number was up to six. What's more, the media coverage didn't break in favor of Republicans. If anything, it portrayed senators of both parties as slightly nutty for participating in a bizarre talkathon made possible by an antiquated set of parliamentary rules. Yet it's through the exploitation of these very rules that Democrats have denied Bush's judges an up-or-down vote on the floor of the chamber. In doing so, they've required nominees who would command simple majorities instead to obtain supermajorities of 60 votes. It may be hoped that more than a few open-minded Americans came away from the debate persuaded that the Democrats have engaged in unprecedented obstruction.

■ Bobby Jindal deserved to be the next governor of Louisiana. He offered conservative principles, a sharp intellect, and an impressive résumé—by age 32, he had directed both his state's health-care department and its university system. He also appeared to be running ahead of his opponent

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THE WEEK...

until the final days, when Democrat Kathleen Blanco unleashed a torrent of negative advertising that gave her a fairly narrow victory on November 15. If Republicans had done what Blanco did—i.e., run ads aimed at rural whites suggesting that the brown-skinned son of Indian immigrants lacked the competence to be governor—the media would have accused them of dirty racist tactics. The conventional wisdom says that Jindal lost because he refused to fire back at Blanco. Whatever the cause of his defeat, it is a disappointing one for conservatives, who saw a future star in this bright young man. In one important sense, however, nothing has changed: Jindal remains a future star.

■ Gore Vidal, the *enragé* essayist who wears the drag of a historian, talked to the *L.A. Weekly* about W. and the Patriot Act. “The Founding Fathers would have found this to be despotism in spades. And they would have hanged anybody who tried to get this through the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. Hanged.” Well, the Federalists among the Founding Fathers crushed the Whiskey Rebellion and passed the Alien and Sedition Acts, while the Republicans (ancestors of today’s Democrats) tried to hang Aaron Burr for treason. Better zip that lip, Mr. Vidal. If W. doesn’t get you, GW, JA, and TJ will.

■ Alan Colmes is one half of the Hannity-and-Colmes duo on Fox News Channel. Which half (right or left)? Well, when asked, “If you could have any other job besides the one you have now, what would it be?” he answered, “I admired William Kunstler. To defend the defenseless, to empower the powerless, to work within the system to change it. Atticus Finch in *To Kill a Mockingbird*.” Let’s hope that Colmes is merely ill informed, rather than cruel. Like the Red lawyer Leonard Boudin, Kunstler was a defender, not of the defenseless, but of the indefensible: e.g., Communist and genocidal regimes throughout the world. He was proud of his personal policy of never uttering a word of criticism regarding any “socialist” country, as he put it—meaning the Soviet Union,

JUST KEEP STILL

*The talking heads say Dean is in;
“It’s over,” quoth Brokaw,
While Judy Woodruff’s in shock, with
A hanging lower jaw.
Dick Gephardt’s upper lip is stiff,
But inside, he’s all mush:
So please, no gloating at this time,
And on the phone, don’t gush.*

—W. H. VON DREELE



Pol Pot’s Cambodia, Castro’s Cuba, etc. He spat on human rights and bore no relation whatever to Harper Lee’s Atticus Finch, a good southern liberal. Hard leftists had nothing but scorn for liberals like Finch, viewing them as soft, quaint, and in the way. Probably the way Kunstler would regard Alan Colmes.

■ It isn’t all beer and skittles, being the Prince of Wales. Just to rid himself of the day, His Royal Highness depends on a platoon of secretaries, valets, and gentlemen’s gentlemen. (One such was recently observed removing the prince’s shoes for him in preparation for sitting down to a Bedouin banquet during a recent royal visit to Oman.) These aides are around the royal person all day long, and the nature of their duties prohibits them from much in the way of normal family life. So: HRH is intimately attended at all hours by men who are much more likely than not to be a little . . . eccentric. Add to this the growing suspicion that the royal show, or at least Charles’s part in it, may be coming to the end of its run, and the temptation for royal servants to cash in with gossip and memoirs becomes irresistible. Most recently there have been dark hints in the British press that someone saw something going on between HRH and a male servant. From what is known of Charles’s private life, it all seems pretty unlikely, and the palace has issued a denial. We can only hope that if there is indeed anything sexually ambiguous about the Prince of Wales, it will not lead to any difficulties when, after ascending the throne, he becomes head of the Church of England . . .

■ A recent poll of EU residents produced some interesting results. Israel came out in first place as the greatest “threat to peace in the world,” followed by Iran, North Korea, and the United States, which all tied for silver. Outrageous? Yes. But how could it be otherwise, when their media so constantly and so consistently tilt against Israel and the U.S.? We are no more surprised than we are when polls of Middle Easterners reveal similar results. This is not to excuse the ignorance or wickedness of the thing, but merely to state a fact. The present conflicts, like those of the past and those of the future, will be judged by One far greater than the unknowing, unfair, ungrateful many across the Atlantic.

■ The first group of tourists has visited Iraq on a two-week tour organized by an English agency called Hinterland Travel. Among them was a cab driver from San Francisco, one Joseph Allen. The Baghdad opera is not yet up, but the group was treated to an interesting show nonetheless: They witnessed a man—a thief, they presumed—being beaten to death with an iron bar (not part of the tour package). Allen told the *New York Post* that the \$2,200 tour was worth every cent, and said that he found the Iraqis very welcoming.

■ “I can’t tell you how excited I am, how happy I am, to be back,” said Rush Limbaugh, opening his November 17 radio show after spending a month in drug rehab for an addiction to painkillers. He began by discussing his recent problems with a welcome honesty, but didn’t spare too much time before throwing his trademark roundhouses at

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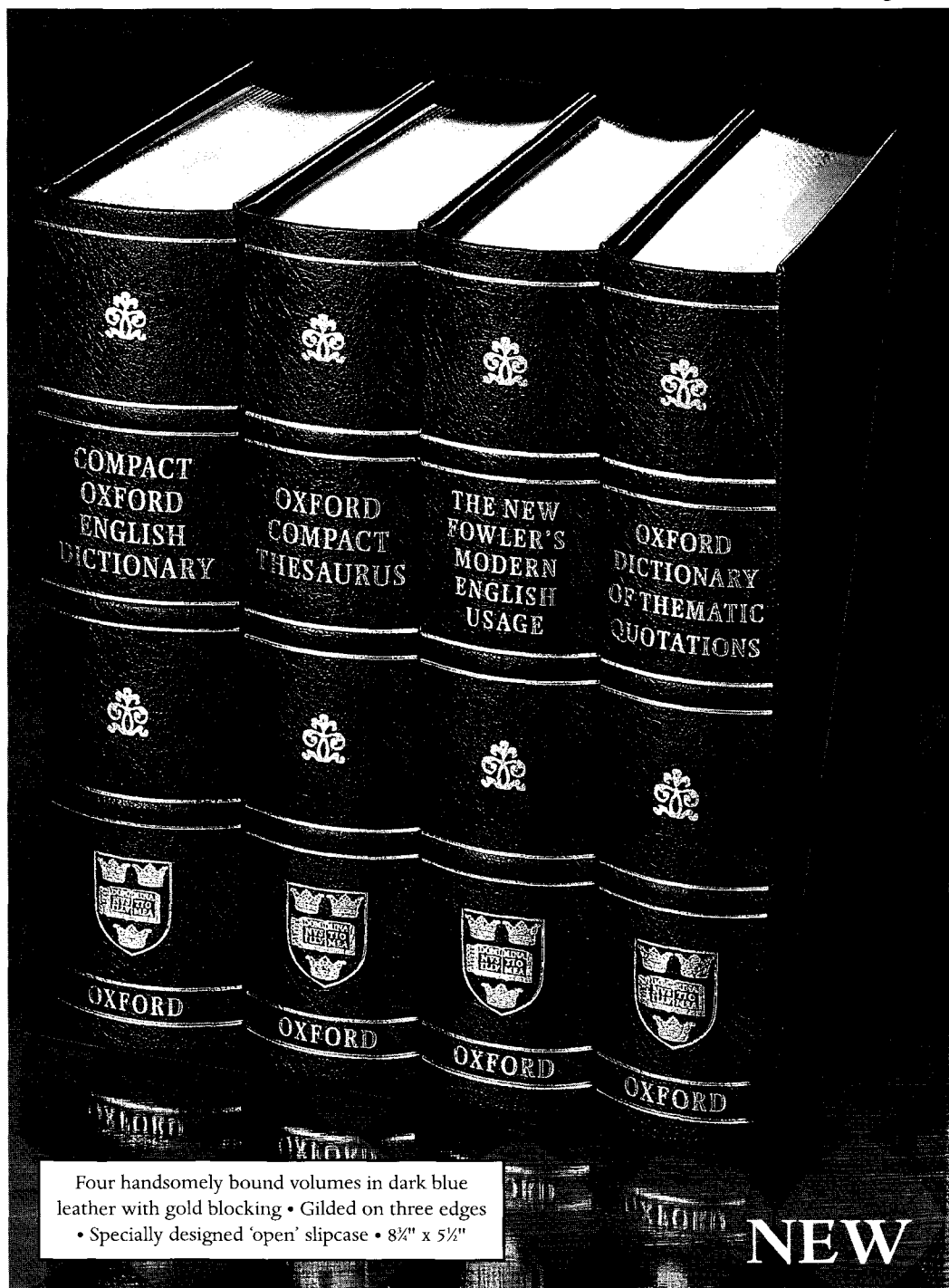
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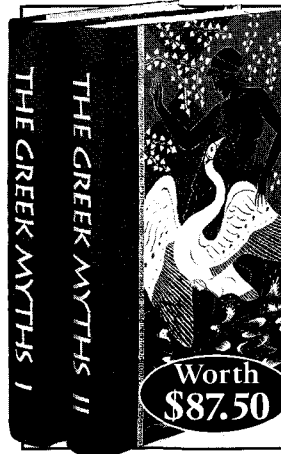
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THE WEEK...

the likes of Hillary Clinton. We're excited and happy to have him back.

■ Earlier this year, New York City established Harvey Milk High School—a safe haven where gay youngsters could escape the bullying of their peers. It has turned, however, into a somewhat more typical Manhattan high school, in that it has bred crime. To be sure, these particular teen crimes are out of the ordinary: A clique of five students has been arrested for dressing up as female prostitutes, soliciting clients in Greenwich Village, and then pretending to be vice-squad cops and shaking them down for money and credit cards. The other kids at Harvey Milk strongly disapprove of their errant classmates' behavior, suggesting that there is such a thing as an innate moral sense that does not depend on the vagaries of the U.S. educational system.

■ The morning of Wednesday, November 5, was a typical one for students at Stratford High School in Goose Creek, S.C.—until (in the words of the *Charleston Post and Courier*) “police officers with guns drawn stormed into the school’s cafeteria . . . and began barking orders at startled students. . . . A police dog sniffed drug residue on 12 book bags but found no drugs.” The raid was, however, far from a waste of time, providing a metaphor for the drug war in practice—overbearing and ineffectual.

■ Loath as we always are to distract our readers’ attention from the great affairs of the republic and the world, we cannot forbear asking the question that is on so many lips: Is Britney Spears headed for a crack-up? The former Mouseketeer has had a bad year, with late appearances, cancellations, and mixed reactions to her on-stage shenanigans with Madonna at the MTV awards. Each of her CDs has sold fewer copies than the previous one, her parents have separated, and the 21-year-old pop star is plainly still distressed from her own break-up with childhood sweetheart Justin Timberlake last year. In a televised interview with Diane Sawyer, young Britney shed some tears. Should grown-up people care? Perhaps. The Sawyer interview revealed a sadness and emptiness that is not Britney’s alone. In show business since age six, ill educated and (so far as one can judge) un-churched, adrift in the vacuous, meretricious world of pop . . . Judy Garland comes to mind. Odd to find oneself, while faced with this icon of beauty, wealth, and fame, think-

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ing: “There but for the grace of God . . .” Spare a thought for Britney.

■ Rosie O’Donnell uttered a refreshing statement. In a court case concerning her now-defunct magazine, *Rosie*, a witness had the actress/comedienne/talk-show host/etc. saying the following: “As a lesbian, I’m uncomfortable being on a magazine cover holding another woman or touching another woman.” That was not the refreshing statement. No, the refreshing statement was what Rosie said later, tartly denying that comment: “I have never in my life said, ‘As a lesbian, blah, blah, blah.’ ‘As a lesbian, pass the salt.’ ‘As a lesbian, give me a Diet Coke.’” Terrific. And may others follow suit (the power pant suit).

■ Looking for an amusing gift, a stocking-stuffer for someone you love at Chr . . . Sorry! Sorry!—over the holidays? Consider one of the new talking action dolls. They come as twelve-inch likenesses of famous people, equipped with a button that, when pressed, causes the doll to speak one of 15 or so different sound bites. The manufacturers have tried to select these utterances so as to give a rounded view of the speaker. The Bill Clinton doll, for example, will say both “We have to change the way the government works” and “It depends upon what the meaning of the word ‘is’ is.” Similarly, the George W. Bush doll offers both “I come from Texas” and “We’re working hard to put food on your family.” This even-handed approach to their subjects breaks down in the case of best-selling conservative author Ann Coulter. Apparently unable to find any non-vituperative quotations from the lady, the makers have programmed her doll’s entire repertoire in the form of anti-liberal diatribes. Well, as this same doll says: “At least when right-wingers rant, there’s a point.”

■ New York City is, of course, the warm beating heart of American liberalism, a place fairly awash with open-mindedness and tolerance. Isn’t it? Not necessarily. Back in 2000, the Rev. Kristopher Okwedy, a Nigerian-born pastor, bought space on two Staten Island billboards and filled them with a Biblical verse: “Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination” (Lev. 18:22). This brought a sharp response from the then-president of the borough, Republican Guy Molinari, who fired off a letter to the billboard company saying that this particular message “is not welcome in our borough.” His letter then reminded the billboard company of the economic benefits they derived from doing business in Staten Island. The offending billboards disappeared. Reverend Okwedy promptly got himself lawyered up, claiming that his First Amendment rights had been violated. Now a federal appeals court has agreed with him, ruling that the implicit threat in Molinari’s letter may have constituted a government assault on freedom of speech. Of course, if Reverend Okwedy had covered his billboards with pictures of scantily-clad pre-teens in provocative poses, everybody would be—as it were—on board with him.

■ High on the honor roll of those who helped bring down the Soviet empire is the name of Leszek Kolakowski. An academic philosopher by trade, Kolakowski was expelled from his

teaching post at Warsaw University in 1968 for heresies against Marxist dogma. He went into exile in Britain, where he wrote the three-volume classic *Main Currents of Marxism*, a thoroughgoing and profound demolition of what he called "the greatest fantasy of our century." When the Solidarity movement came up in the 1980s, Kolakowski worked tirelessly in its behalf; one Solidarity leader described him as "the awakener of human hopes." Kolakowski went on to write 30 books on philosophy, history, and religion, and is still writing today. On November 5, at a ceremony in the Great Hall of the Library of Congress, Kolakowski became the first recipient of the Kluge Prize for lifetime achievement in the social sciences and humanities. The million-dollar award is intended to honor those who advance our understanding of politics and human society; to honor them, that is, in the same way, and on the same scale, that the Nobel prizes honor achievement in physics, economics, and so on. A worthier first recipient could hardly have been found.

CULTURE WATCH

The Left at the Altar

WHAT has the high court of Massachusetts wrought? Don't look to the Democratic presidential candidates for guidance. On the day that a bare majority of the court declared that marriage licenses must be given to same-sex couples, Howard Dean issued a statement so mealy-mouthed and evasive that it did not even include the word "marriage." He suggested that the court had acted in the spirit of the Vermont supreme court, which in 1999 forced the state legislature to create civil unions for homosexual couples. "One way or another," said the supposedly straight-shooting governor, "the state should afford same-sex couples equal treatment under law in areas such as health insurance, hospital visitation and inheritance rights." Dean went on to warn that some people would "try to use the decision today to divide Americans."

John Kerry's statement also referred to hospital visitation rights and the like. Kerry continued, "While I continue to oppose gay marriage, I believe that today's decision calls on the Massachusetts state legislature to take action to ensure equal protection for gay couples. These protections are long overdue." Dick Gephardt said, "I do not support gay marriage, but I hope the Massachusetts State Legislature will act in a manner that is consistent with today's Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruling." Joe Lieberman and John Edwards took no explicit position on the ruling, saying only that they oppose gay marriage but also oppose federal efforts to undo the ruling.

Opponents and supporters of gay marriage alike should be disgusted by these dodges. The court's decision plainly imposes a regime of gay marriage on Massachusetts. The court has said that the state constitution requires this change. The court graciously grants the state legislature some time—180 days—to alter state marriage law so that same-sex couples can get married. If the legislature does not make this alteration,

however, the court will still order county clerks to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples. Dean implies that the court merely wants gay couples to have various benefits, and Kerry says that it merely wants them to have "protections." Actually, it wants them to have the right to marry. If the legislature is to "act in a manner that is consistent with" the ruling, as Gephardt urges, it will bless the very thing that he says he does not "support." The Democratic hopefuls do not want the public to see them as supporters of gay marriage, but they do not want liberals to see them as opponents of the Massachusetts decision either. But no honest middle ground exists. If you oppose gay marriage, then you cannot support, or even be neutral toward, the Massachusetts decision. That decision holds that the equal dignity of citizens requires gay marriage. If you do not oppose the decision, you do not really oppose gay marriage.

Actually, the difficulty for those who would prefer to sit on the fence is even worse than that. If you agree with the Massachusetts ruling—if you think that it was rightly reasoned as well as rightly decided—you cannot even be a moderate supporter of gay marriage who believes that intelligent people of good will may disagree. Opponents of gay marriage are irrational bigots, equivalent to the people who opposed interracial marriage in bygone days. The court declares that there is no rational basis for defining marriage in a way that renders same-sex couples ineligible. Thus the traditional marriage law cannot survive even if the court subjects it to the lowest level of scrutiny it can apply. The court repeatedly likens its decision to the Supreme Court's invalidation of bans on interracial marriage. It sees no difference between the cases.

The erosion of marriage in our law and culture helped carry the Massachusetts court to its conclusion. The court recognizes that we have severed many of the links among marriage, sex, and the raising of children. But it does not follow from that indisputable premise that our law and culture do not link these things at all, or that they should not link them. A court could just as easily conclude that to the extent that the courts themselves have broken these links, they should go back and re-create them. It could just as easily conclude that the people of Massachusetts have conflicting and sometimes inconsistent views about the nature of marriage, and that the law may reflect that muddle without needing judicial correction.

Instead the Massachusetts court chose to take sides in a culture war—complete with implicit insults toward one side. There is reason to think that other states will catch later trains to the same destination. A majority of the Supreme Court has twice invalidated laws that reflect a traditional understanding of sexual morality, judging them expressions of bigotry. Will it in a few years work a nationalization of what the Massachusetts court has done? Will 10, 20, 30 state judiciaries follow that court's example? If the people of half the states chose to redefine marriage, the people of the other half would have no legitimate complaint (although they would have the right to argue for their side). We are all for federalism. But federalism is not the same thing as government by 50 state judiciaries.

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THE WEEK...

In his initial response to the Massachusetts decision, President Bush said that the court had “violated” the principle that marriage is the union of a man and a woman. That comment alone contained more honesty than anything his Democratic rivals have said. It remains for him to acknowledge that the problem of judicial overreach is national in its scope, and can be met only by a constitutional amendment.

AT WAR

Adjusting, Persevering

PAUL BREMER, the American administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq, made a quick trip to Washington to meet with President Bush, and emerged with a new plan for reconstructing Iraq, one that would turn power over to an Iraqi government by June 2004. At the same time, the Pentagon announced that the total number of American troops in Iraq would be cut by one-fifth next year.

Does the Bush administration have the wind up? Is it planning for a headline-free Republican convention in the summer of 2004? Is America thinking of an exit strategy? Are the jihadists, who drew such encouraging conclusions from Somalia, thinking of victory?

Bremer and Bush insisted that we would be in Iraq for as long as necessary—“We’re not leaving until the job is done, pure and simple,” Bush said—and that our troops would keep fighting Baathists and jihadists, even after sovereignty had been transferred. (American troops, by way of comparison, have been in Germany half a century and counting after the occupation ceased.) There is much that our troops can usefully accomplish, if they follow the proven strategies of

We should be modest about how many of our values can be successfully exported so soon.

counterinsurgency, working with local militias and focusing on intelligence and the turning of enemies. One of the most robust myths of Vietnam is that guerrillas always win in the end, but Britain’s successful experience with Communist rebels in Malaysia gives it the lie. So do our own successes in Vietnam, in programs like Phoenix and the Kit Carson Scouts. We lost in Vietnam because the elite lost heart

after the Tet offensive, a conventional military battle; but the main reason the Communists launched Tet was that we had successfully eviscerated the Vietcong.

Is the shift in the political timetable prudent? Our old plan called for an Iraqi constitution to be written before the election of a provisional government. Now we have reversed the process. Bremer insists that there will be an interim constitution containing a bill of rights and an independent judiciary. He also says that the permanent constitution will embody “those American values.” Perhaps it would be a good idea, as

Amir Taheri suggests, to have a referendum on such a list of values, which would make them Iraqi, as well as American. We should also be modest about how many of our values can be successfully exported so soon. Iraqis need freedom of worship, economic freedom, an independent judiciary, and security for women who wish to live non-traditional lives. Voting is important as a symbol of their sovereignty and self-esteem. But good government is more important than continuous elections.

Much is uncertain in Iraq, but one option focuses the mind, and binds most Iraqis and Americans together. A supposed tape of Saddam Hussein urged Iraqis to return power to “the same individuals that people trusted for decades.” Yes, trusted to spy on, rob, rape, mutilate, and kill them. The *New York Times*’s John F. Burns, the best journalist in pre-war Iraq, gave his impressions of a return visit. “By far the most common view” of Iraqis “has been that for all the U.S. failures, as they see them, a guarantee of greater misery still would be the premature withdrawal of American troops. These Iraqis, for the most part, do not make that the first point of any conversation, more often it is the last, but it is their bottom line.” Burns spoke to a crowd in Nasiriyah, after the Italian military police barracks was bombed there. “‘No, no!’ one man said. ‘If the Americans go, it will be chaos everywhere.’ . . . ‘If the Americans, the British, or the Italians leave Iraq, we will be handed back to the flunkies of Saddam, [and] the Baathists and al-Qaeda will take over our cities,’ another man said.”

AT WAR II

The Theme Is Freedom

PRESIDENT BUSH’s speech at the 20th anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy conveyed the stamp of the man. Its theme was simple, classical, that freedom is an absolute value the whole world over, not negotiable. It is the basis of our society, our civilization. Regimes of one dictatorial sort or another have placed considerations of power, race, religion, or some other collective notion above freedom. All have failed in human terms. The record speaks for itself. The president rightly rejoiced that 30 years ago there were about 40 democracies, and today around 120.

Democratic Germany and Japan are conspicuous through success. Russia has replaced the Soviet Union, for most of the 20th century a main destroyer of peoples and societies. China today, as Bush said, may be concluding that freedom is essential to national greatness and national dignity. Islam is the one great civilization immune so far to the huge tide of social and political liberation otherwise encompassing the globe. For years, observers have been holding a magnifying glass up to the Muslim Middle East in the hope of detecting signs of burgeoning democracy. They could not help seeing instead the stagnation and misery that grows out of dictatorship, but everyone who knows the region will affirm that the long-suffering people there are not for a moment fooled by those who claim to be doing great things in their name. Well aware that a better life is not only possible but potentially within reach, they ask for liberation.

Saddam Hussein used Iraq's immense oil revenues to build a military and security apparatus that overshadowed the Middle East. His overthrow has unblocked neighboring Arab and Muslim countries, calling into question the political and economic structures preventing them from taking their rightful place in the free and modern world. It is self-evident that the likes of the Taliban, Hamas, al-Qaeda, and the Iranian ayatollahs pursuing nuclear weapons have nothing to offer except death and destruction to their own people in the first place, and then to others.

To bring these assorted psychopaths and fanatics into the human fold is a task requiring armed strength and moral reso-

lution. It also requires time, as the institutions and culture of liberty will be difficult to plant in soil hitherto inhospitable to them. In Iraq at present, the United States is laying the ground for the rule of law, and no doubt will have to supervise and guarantee it for some years to come. A sovereign and democratic Iraq would be a beacon to its own citizens and to other people in the Middle East. Visionary as it may sound, the existence of such a state is the most practical and sure-fire way to expose the cruel pretensions of Islamist extremists and so make strides in the War on Terror. President Bush in this speech paid warm tribute to Ronald Reagan. He shows himself to be building on the work of that particular predecessor.

notes & asides

■ Remarks at the funeral service for Thomas Hume, St. Clement's Church, Stamford, Connecticut, November 6, 2003

We were all of us, in the Yale Class of 1950, asked to give a few sentences of biographical information for the 50th anniversary yearbook. Tom Hume wrote: "My life changed on November 16, 1981, when I suffered a stroke at age 53. After a difficult recovery, stretching over two years, I have limited ability to read, write, or converse." But he did manage, with appropriate contrivances, to drive a car, and to captain a Dyer 29, frequenting Long Island Sound, which, as he put it, "I know well and find endlessly fascinating." And he cruised in the waterways of Europe, and spent happy days with his ten grandchildren. He cultivated, also, his artistic skills and painted in watercolor.

When in 1949 I introduced Tom, at Yale, to my fiancée, Pat Taylor, she turned to me after he had left the room and said, "That is the most handsome man I have ever laid eyes on." I suppressed my jealousy, and concurred. He was, also, a brilliant student. As an architect, years later, he did wonderfully imaginative work for me, including a subterranean swimming pool which I cheerfully hailed in one of my books as the most beautiful this side of the mosaic pool in Pompeii, which caused my critics

to croak forth that I was advertising my own artistic talents, requiring me to rebuke them publicly by saying that I had nothing to do with the pool, except to pay for it: The artistry of it was Tom Hume's, and Robert Goodnough's.

One evening in October 1981, we set out on my sloop at 6 P.M., headed for Newport. We arrived just after 10 the next morning, a heady propulsion, Stamford to Newport, 135 miles in 16 hours. All of nature, wind and tides, colluded to get us there at maximum speed, with a southerly wind, in bright autumn weather. Tom, the expert sailor, had sailed and raced with me from time to time, including one trip to Bermuda. He was always calm, decisive, inquisitive, companionable. But six weeks later he was lying on his back in a hospital bed.

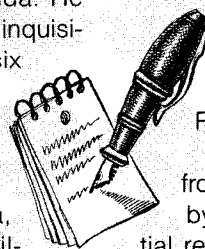
I wrote about that visit in one of my books back then. "The omniscient Tulita, having brought up six children," I reported, "had now been working for Channel 13 in New York, but substantially she has become a therapist, wholly confident of Tom's recovery. Tom can't talk, though one has the feeling that he can understand. His eyes are luminous with intelligence, and every now and again he attempts a phrase, but it usually reduces, smiling through his effort, merely to 'shit,' a word, in his frustration, he seems to utter with

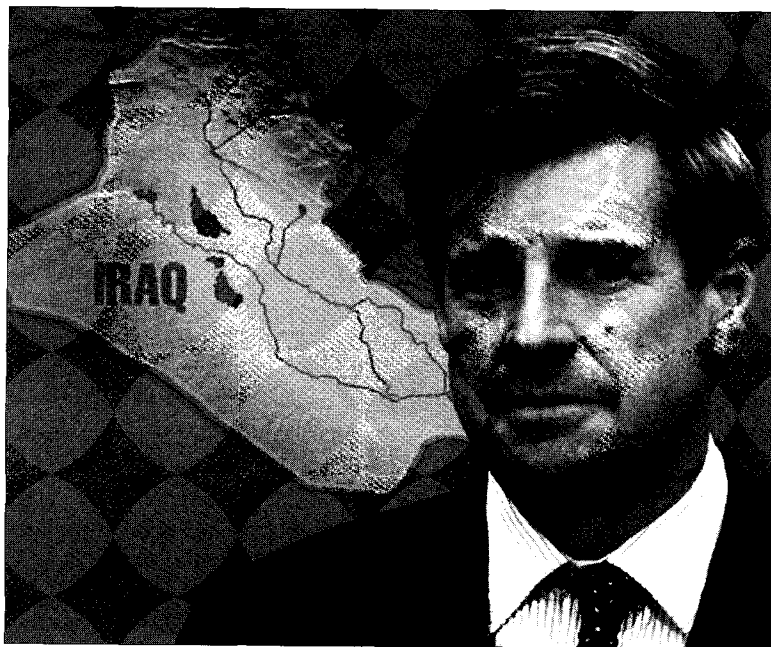
abandon and security. His right arm is lifeless, and he has been practicing pencil strokes with his left hand. I dumped on him last week a supply of oils, brushes, and crayons. He has not broken them out—probably he is having trouble concentrating. His ambition, Tulita tells me, is to leave the hospital and go directly to the therapeutic center, and from there right back to his desk at the office, say in six months. Let us pray. I told him I had done just that at church, and he didn't say shit, perhaps because he is himself a believer. His uncle founded Canterbury School, his cousin is head of St. David's in New York."

Those hopes were denied. What never altered was the devoted care Tulita gave him. In my lifetime, I have known two women about whom I could say that their pledges to stand by, in sickness and in health, were wholly tested, Tulita Hume and Nancy Reagan.

My wife and I saw the Humes from time to time, and although by now there was no substantial relief in store for Tom, he was always cheerful. He loved to laugh, and he had help from the Lord, whose temple he frequented almost daily, one final time this morning, when we mourn his death, while reaffirming the joy we took from his friendship, commending him to eternal rest, and resolved always to remember him as a most handsome man, in our eyes, and, surely, in the eyes of the Lord.

—WFB





■ AT WAR ■

What Britain Learned

And how America can build, in Iraq

DAVID PRYCE-JONES

EXTREMISTS in Iraq, especially in the Sunni areas around Falluja and Ramadi, are blowing up convoys and armored trains, attacking police posts, and killing our soldiers and political officers, in addition to Arabs prepared to work with us. Very familiar, right? Only these events took place in the second half of 1920, at a time when the British were making a first attempt to create a modern country out of what had previously been the Ottoman Turkish provinces of Mesopotamia.

The British had invaded these provinces during the First War in order to protect India. Muslims everywhere—but particularly in India, it was feared—might be susceptible to an Ottoman call for

jihad. The Turks fought a hard defensive war, but there was no jihad. By the end of 1918 the British, or the French, had control of all the Turkish provinces.

Centuries of Ottoman rule had not left much to show. Benign neglect had triumphed over efforts to develop. The inhabitants of these provinces defined themselves as they had done immemorably, by their various tribal and religious and ethnic affiliations. The central schism in Islam between Sunnis and Shia had particular importance in the Mesopotamian provinces. Sunni themselves, the Ottomans had made sure to promote the Sunni Arab minority as a ruling class at the expense of the Shia majority. Shia ayatollahs had long wanted to have a state of their own, but had never been able to break through the Sunni oppression and stranglehold on power. In their holy cities of Najaf and Karbala, the downtrodden Shia masses consoled themselves with

religious demonstrations that verged on violence. In the northern province of Mosul, the Kurds also aspired to a state of their own. They are Muslims but not Arabs, and their further division into feuding tribes and clans remains an obstacle to political compromise to this day.

Nobody in London had given thought to this patchwork of identities, as strong as they were mutually exclusive. In peacetime, Gertrude Bell, a well-connected society lady, had learned Arabic and ridden through these provinces. Enrolled as an adviser during the war, she put her finger on the flux of official opinion. “The real difficulty here is that we don’t know exactly what we want to do in this country.”

The international climate of the day supported independence for all peoples everywhere. President Wilson, the other Versailles treaty-makers, and the new League of Nations were happily redesigning the defeated empires on that principle. In an expansive mood, the British and French governments, winners of the war in the Middle East, issued a joint declaration in favor of the “establishment of national governments and administrations drawing their authority from the initiative and free choice of indigenous populations.” Some officials knew that this was wishful thinking. A Colonial Office paper, for instance, noted all in its own euphemistic style that it could not be said “that any clear ideas of the duties and privileges of democratic citizenship had been widely spread among all classes of the people.” The Mesopotamian provinces might be refashioned into a unitary Iraq, but the British saw themselves retaining ultimate responsibility there.

The British were practiced in replacing military rule in their empire with civilian administration. In the new Iraq, from 1917 to 1920 Sir Arnold Wilson was appointed Civil Commissioner. High-minded and classically educated, he had served for years in India. Many of his staff of political officers shared this Indian experience. Linguists, delighting in the customs of tribes and clans, explorers, soldiers, dedicated to their mission, they were the best the British empire had to offer. Gertrude Bell was posted to Baghdad as Oriental Secretary. She spoke for many when she said that the British now had to make efforts “to

Mr. Pryce-Jones is an NR senior editor and the author of, among many other books, *The Closed Circle: An Interpretation of the Arabs*.

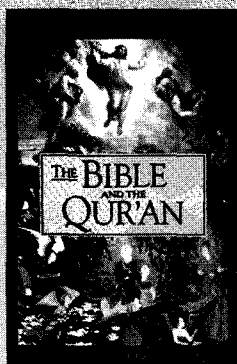
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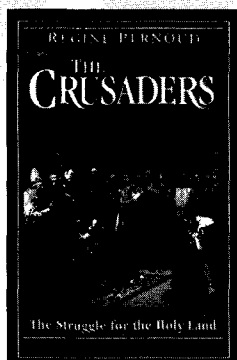


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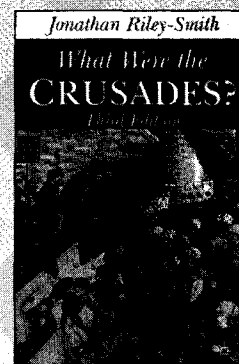
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squeeze the Arabs into our mold.”

Loyalties, Sir Arnold Wilson’s account in two volumes of his time as Civil Commissioner, is a great book, a classic of its kind well worth reading today. Wilson quickly came to terms with reality. The idea of Iraq as an independent nation, he wrote, “had scarcely taken shape.” Talk about independence and the “free choice of indigenous populations” was empty—or more dangerously, an encouragement to everyone with ambitions or grievances to take up arms. To speculate openly about the role of the British, future forms of government, and the possible selection of an Arab candidate to rule only emphasized that power was up for grabs.

Sunni Arabs continued to claim the monopoly of power that they had been accustomed to since Ottoman rule. Their leaders spoke the new nationalist language of independence and the free choice of the people, but to Sir Arnold they were taking up arms for the sake of their personal careers. “A vigorous offensive,” he wrote, “was the only practical means open to them of realising their political ambitions.” At one point he had a clandestine midnight meeting with some of these nationalists in Baghdad. When he warned them not to use force, they replied that the nations of Europe always yield to force, and would do so again, granting Iraq full independence. None of his superiors wanted to listen to Sir Arnold’s prediction that the Shia would never willingly accept Sunni rule.

The title of his memoirs is ironic. The whole secret was to devise some larger loyalty for these warring identities that would allow them to compromise,

squeezing towards something in “our mold.” The old religious and ethnic loyalties were completely impervious to change, and so he in due course advised London that the choice was between evacuating and leaving the Iraqis to the horrors to come, or imposing British rule for the sake of stability. In London they believed there was yet another choice, namely the construction of an independent Iraq that would remain somehow under British influence. Sir Arnold was recalled, and ever since he has been maligned as an old Indian hand who couldn’t take the temper of the times.

Thousands of Arabs were killed in the 1920 uprising. Force on this scale panicked the British, as Sunni nationalists had foreseen. Hurrying forward their plan for independence with puppet strings attached, they selected an Arab ruler, Faisal, one of the sons of the Hashemite Sherif of Mecca, a Sunni sure enough, but a total stranger to Iraq. In the attempt to guarantee their continuing influence, the British had to rig a plebiscite to approve Faisal, a coronation, a legislative election and a phony parliament, and lastly international treaties. It was all a mirage. The Shia, the Kurds, and the tribes never accepted Faisal, and the treaties were ineffective. Shortly before his death in 1933, Faisal described his people as “unimaginable masses of human beings, devoid of any patriotic idea, imbued with religious traditions and absurdities, connected by no common tie, giving ear to evil; prone to anarchy and perpetually ready to rise against any government whatever.” A straight line of Sunni tyranny leads from the weak and unscrupulous Faisal to the mass graves of Saddam Hussein and his Baathists.

Like the British, the Americans entered the country with no clear idea of what to do with it. The absence of a government-in-waiting has made the transformation of military rule into civil administration much more fraught than it need have been. Washington took the view that Iraq would ultimately prove fit for independence. In the same dilemma as Sir Arnold

Wilson, Ambassador Paul Bremer has had to decide whether this is, in fact, true, and to help him he has about a thousand top-class experts of all sorts. Like the British in the summer of 1920, Bremer now faces the offensive of Sunni thugs advancing their ambitions through force.

To judge by President Bush’s summoning of Bremer to Washington with every appearance of panic, and then by their subsequent statements, the decision has been made that the Americans will do as the British did before them. As early as next summer apparently, the present American civil administration is to give

way to an independent Iraqi government. Once more the talk is of expedients, of a constitution, elections and legislatures, and sovereignty. Nobody knows what form any of this will take. Like the British, the Americans have searched for a Sunni figurehead. In the dreadful aftermath of Baathism, no such person exists. Ahmad Chalabi might have fulfilled the leadership role, but he is a Shia, and for this and other reasons evident only to itself, the State Department has gone to extraordinary lengths to shut him out.

Eighty years separate the British and American endeavors to create a viable and independent nation-state out of intractable ethnic, religious, and tribal loyalties. Eighty years of the same Shia and Kurdish fears and aspirations. Eighty years of violence repeating itself in the quest for power. Eighty years of waste and loss, yielding time after time to force. The idea of an independent Iraq still hasn’t taken shape; and the duties and privileges of democratic citizenship are no clearer there than they were. The breaking of such a history is a human endeavor of a high order. President Bush is in a position to see it through. Maybe Sir Arnold was too clear-cut and impolitic in his analysis, but he deserves the last word. What he said about his men goes for the Americans too: “They stood in lonely places not only for their country, but for the ideals of justice which, as the world will some day come to realise, transcend those of nationality.”

NR

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Never Again, Again

The Holocaust Museum
and 9/11

WILLIAM J. BENNETT

AT a recent “Days of Remembrance” event at the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., Elie Wiesel said, “Memory is tragedy’s most indispensable element.” No modern evil compares to the Holocaust, and the Holocaust Museum—along with the preservation of the Holocaust’s memory—has taught much. Its ten-year anniversary this year is to be celebrated.

The Holocaust Museum succeeds in its mission by showing one grim, discouraging, horrible picture after another. To go through the museum is to see the center of Hell. It is neither an uplifting nor an encouraging experience, but, better, especially for our times, it is a deepening one. In a world where a majority of images speed by us and are forgotten, such deepening experiences—even into the heart of darkness—are indispensable for memory, perspective, and action. It is an irony of our time that, while many advocate the personal expression of any and all emotions and feelings, we are squeamish about telling the stories of human atrocity. Why should such hesitancy govern when allowing it to do so leads to amnesia and loss of will?

A tragedy forgotten is a tragedy that happened only to a direct victim. A tragedy remembered is a tragedy that teaches all of us lessons: that we cannot sit idly by as our brothers’ blood is shed; that what happened as a result of the indolence of the decent should never happen again. “Never

again” is the main lesson we have learned from the Holocaust—never again would we allow human beings to be slaughtered when we could have prevented it; never again would we sit silently while we knew slaughter was taking place. Another lesson: If tragedy can be prevented before it happens, prevent it. If Hitler could have been stopped in 1928, or 1938, the world would have forgiven such action—or so one would hope. It is a human duty to remember humanity, to remember that other human beings shall not be treated like animals and slaughtered, that tyrants shall not be allowed to act like gods, choosing who shall live and who shall die.

That tyrants and terrorists today may be Arabs and Muslims—and not Germans—is no reason to be less concerned about the intolerable. So let us remember what terrorists have done to us, and to human beings everywhere. Let us erect a museum to commemorate September 11 and its aftermath so that we do not forget what happened that day, what could happen again, and what was happening in the Middle East and Afghanistan before we responded. We need such a museum today so that foolish and dangerous comments like Michael Moore’s—“There is no terrorist threat”—do not become the coin of the realm in thought, conversation, and indifference.

That museum need not be elaborate, nor need it be confined to one location. Let it be put on CD-ROM, DVD, and VHS. And let the media announce that they are going to show these atrocities, and let them then be shown. In fact, the media should make time in their otherwise anodyne lineups for such true reality shows. There have been complaints of late that the Pentagon is enforcing a ban on displaying military caskets. That ban should be lifted, but only so long as the unspoken ban on the footage of what led to this war is also lifted. That footage should be aired late at night, without graphic promotional video. There should be warnings about the content: Parents should make sure that their younger children are out of the room, and should talk with their older children before watching it with them.

The first images of the museum should be of the airplanes flying into the Twin Towers. Then, with slight alterations to preserve anonymity, there should follow footage of the estimated 200 people who

jumped from the towers. We should watch their seemingly eternal, yet final, last ten seconds of life. We should think about what they were thinking as “the force generated by their fall ripped the drapes, the tablecloths, the desperately gathered fabric, from their hands,” as *Esquire* contributor Tom Junod has written. We should then see image after image of the Towers crashing. We should see images of the Pentagon on fire. And we should see photograph after photograph of those who died in New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania—with their families, at their weddings, at celebrations, enjoying a life that 19 thugs and a poisonous ideology ripped from them, and from us.

Then, we should see image after image of what the Taliban, bin Laden, and Mullah Omar trained people to do. We should see al-Qaeda training camps. And, with his family’s consent, we should see images of *Wall Street Journal* reporter Daniel Pearl’s execution.

On to Iraq, the latest focus in the war on terrorism, the latest effort to rid the world of another mass-murdering tyrant. We should see the videos that former New York City police chief Bernard Kerik saw in Baghdad: “Interrogations of Iraqis whose lives ended with the detonation of a grenade that was tied to the neck or stuffed in the shirt pocket of the victim . . .

*Victims of Saddam’s
reign of terror*



JACQUES LANGEVIN/CORBIS SYGMA

Mr. Bennett is the Washington Fellow of the Claremont Institute and the author of *Why We Fight: Moral Clarity and the War on Terrorism*.

living bodies disintegrate at the pull of the pin . . . a tape of Saddam sitting and watching one of his military generals being eaten alive by Dobermans because the general's loyalty was in question."

We should see the plastic shredding devices that Labour MP Ann Clwyd brought to the world's attention, with the following testimony from Iraqi witnesses: "There was a machine designed for shredding plastic. Men were dropped into it and we were again made to watch. Sometimes they went in head first and died quickly. Sometimes they went in feet first and died screaming. . . . Their remains would be placed in plastic bags and we were told they would be used as fish food."

We should read testimony from the survivors of the chemical attack on Halabja that killed a minimum of 5,000 people. We should see the torture chambers and the rape rooms. We should see mass graves like the one near al-Hilla described by Christopher Hitchens: "The remains of at least 3,000 individuals were brought to the surface. . . . [E]yewitnesses from the horrific repression of 1991 report having seen three truckloads of prisoners three times a day, for a month, being unloaded there." We need to see these images again, for too many seem to have forgotten them.

Rebuilding Iraq is not going perfectly well. We all know that because the press has been all too anxious to propagate that story, and because we can see the images coming out of that country, too. But rebuilding any country is difficult. When I attended left-wing rallies on behalf of human rights in my youth, I used to hear the quote from Tom Paine that "we have it in our power to begin the world over again." In the Middle East—the cradle of dictatorship and terrorism—we are beginning the world again. This is what such work looks like. Yet many have forgotten that all beginnings are difficult. If it succeeds, we will see more democracy, less war, and less torture. And, someday, we may even have the luxury of saying about this, and other memorials to horror, that we do not remember the world that brought them about. In the meantime, we must preserve these recent memories because, already, the wrong things—the best reasons for action—are being forgotten. With such amnesia, "never again" seems less a guarantee and more a remote desire.

NR

■ THE ECONOMY

The Audacity to Succeed

President Bush's tax cuts have worked, and this has stirred the pot

KEVIN A. HASSETT

OVER the past year, the bile in the writings of left-wingers has become so extreme that even they have begun to notice. The *New York Times's* Nicholas Kristof, for example, devoted a recent piece (titled "Hold the Vitriol") to the intemperateness of the Left, while *The New Republic's* normally blithe-spirited Jonathan Chait wrote a lengthy apology for his own hatred of Bush. If anything,

the flurry of delightful economic news has increased the intensity of liberals' emotions, so much so that they are turning on one another like hungry cannibals. Witness *Slate's* announcement that "the long-awaited Krugman Gotcha Contest can begin. A prize, to be announced, for the reader who comes up with the gloom-and-doom opinion from the fabled Princeton economist's recent writings that now looks the most embarrassingly wrong."

Jonathan Chait's hypothesis is that Bush-hatred is attributable mostly to the president's advocacy of policies that are not liberal. But that criticism could have applied equally to any other Republican who held significant political power. No, the intensity of emotions is attributable to a different and far more interesting development: Because of President Bush's aggressive tax policies, the economic worldview adopted by the Democratic

Mr. Hassett is director of economic policy studies at the American Enterprise Institute.

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party in recent years is proving, through collective experience, to be totally and irrevocably incorrect. Their champions are now exposed to ridicule—because they have failed.

The GOP policymakers, meanwhile, have been on a roll. Tax policies designed by gifted students of economics such as Harvard's N. Gregory Mankiw and Columbia's R. Glenn Hubbard have worked exactly as intended. Accordingly, the Democrats' hatred is quite akin to that of the typical Red Sox fan for the New York Yankees. It is not just that the Republicans are winning the votes, they are winning the intellectual debate as well; they are winning everything. Think back, for example, to a stunning piece published in February 2001 in the *New York Times* by the Goliath of the Democrats, former Treasury secretary Robert Rubin. Rubin led with the melodramatic statement that "I had not intended to get involved in the public debate on fiscal policy, but I feel so strongly that a tax cut of the magnitude proposed is a serious error in economic policy that I felt a need to speak." He goes on to present a mantra that has been chanted by Democrats ever since: The reduction in the government surplus associated with the tax cut will

bring back the high interest rates and slow growth of the late 1980s and early 1990s.

The problem with this analysis at the time was that it seemed so at odds with history. Deficits had swung around wildly for three decades, with no apparent correlation with interest rates. The analysis seems even more preposterous now. At the time that Rubin warned of high interest rates, the ten-year U.S. rate was above 5 percent. Now, with deficits as far as the eye can see, the ten-year rate is more than half a percentage point *lower*. And economic growth? Through the roof.

What is worse, Rubin's story was logically flawed. Economic activity depends on the after-tax cost of capital, which depends on the interest rate and taxes. If taxes go down, firms invest more. If interest rates go down, firms invest more. Rubin asserts that tax cuts will not help the economy, but higher interest rates will hurt it. Such a view reveals a shocking unfamiliarity with basic economics or even simple logic. Small wonder that his predictions turned out to be so inaccurate.

In retrospect, scholars now mostly agree that the Bush tax cuts were well-timed medicine for an ailing economy. Indeed, there was only one other time in U.S. history (1981) that the federal government was nimble enough to pass a major tax cut in the first quarter of a recession. The tax cuts saved the day: Consumption held the economy up in the dark times, and consumption was most likely strong because of timely tax refunds. At a recent economic conference that addressed the empirical question of whether the Bush tax cuts stimulated consumption as intended, Federal Reserve economist and noted consumption expert Julia Coronado (speaking for herself and not the Fed, in accord with Fed policy) stated that the results suggesting that consumption responded significantly to the Bush tax cuts were convincing and that they "reaffirm the findings of a pretty extensive prior literature."

But as the economy evolved, it became increasingly evident that businesses were not doing as well as consumers. President Bush responded by adopting two additional tax changes, a dividend tax cut and an expansion of the tax break firms

receive if they purchase capital equipment. These policies were also derided by Democrats because of their deficit impact, and they too have worked exactly as planned. The dividend tax cut was, its advocates argued, designed to boost the stock market and business investment. The stock market began a significant surge as soon as the tax cut was passed, and third-quarter economic activity was so astonishing precisely because capital spending soared.

Rubin is not alone. Consider a leading entrant in *Slate's* Krugman Gotcha Contest. In July of this year, the first month of one of the best quarters in U.S. history, Krugman wrote that "there is very little evidence in the data for a strong recovery ready to break out. As far as I can make out, Mr. [Alan] Greenspan's optimism is entirely based on models predicting that tax cuts and low interest rates will get the economy moving." This quote is most notable in the present context because it states the Democratic case precisely and correctly. The only coherent liberal argument is that the interest rate and the tax cuts should both have little effect on the economy. Krugman, therefore, is wrong and logically consistent; Rubin is wrong and illogical as well.

Of course, the facts have confirmed Greenspan's analysis. Taxes and interest rates do matter. The economy is recovering now precisely because the Federal Reserve and top Bush economists recognized early on that economic analysis is a useful guide to policy. The problem for Democrats is that these facts invalidate their core philosophy. Republicans have been branded as the party of tax cuts. Democrats have been branded as the party that opposes tax cuts on the grounds that they do not help the economy but do undermine social justice. Democrats also pretend that this social justice is accurately measured by the myriad distribution tables so efficiently mass-produced by left-wing think tanks.

But if tax cuts lead to booms (like that in the third quarter), then the little guy benefits from them as well. Democratic policy actions undermine the very social justice that they purport to seek. If the economy is better now than it would have been absent the tax cuts, then there are surely many thousands of workers who

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have not lost their jobs—thanks to sound Republican tax policy. Such facts are a problem for those who oppose tax cuts in the interest of the working class.

Anticipating this line of argument back in 1931, John Maynard Keynes wrote that “the economic problem may be solved, or be within sight of a solution, within a hundred years. This means that the economic problem is not—if we look into the future—the permanent problem of the human race.” While there is still much that we do not know about how economies work, there is much that we do know. The evidence of the harmful effects of high tax rates is convincing enough that even the socialist Europeans have adopted corporate tax rates below ours. When the economy booms, everyone is better off, so what is there left to fight about? Indeed the lone holdouts against this new enlightenment have been the Democrats, led on by their assertive heroes. But as knowledge replaces superstition, adherents of failed models walk off the public stage. It is noisy now for one reason: Discord lies along the path to irrelevance.

Amidst the discord, the Democrats will either find an identity that is more in tune with the modern understanding of economics or they will go the way of the Whigs. While the short-run political benefits of the chaos in the other party may be high, Republicans should take note that it is an exciting time to be a Democrat. The party’s ideology has been proven wrong and leading intellectuals—such as Matthew Miller, author of the challenging new book *The Two Percent Solution*—are now struggling to define a new and coherent social philosophy for the Left. Just as the Red Sox are seeking a new manager, the Democrats are interviewing new champions.

This may change the future far more than Republicans now realize. Republicans have likely gained power to pursue conservative social policies in part because of the votes of religiously agnostic economic pragmatists. It may well be that the epic in which the leading Democrats spout theories that are patently absurd is almost over. A more economically reasonable opponent for social conservatives—and a tectonic shift in the political landscape—may be just around the next bend.

NR

■ THE NATION

Count on It

Non-citizens—even illegal aliens—are included in the Census. Think this affects the political system?

JOHN J. MILLER

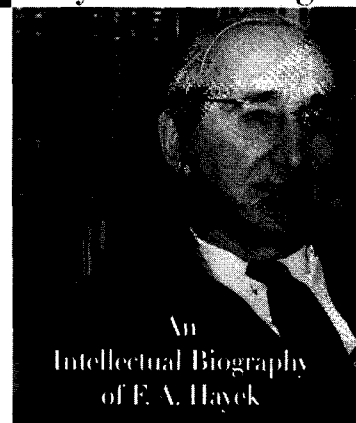
NOBODY in the House of Representatives has more constituents than Denny Rehberg. With some 900,000 people in his district—which encompasses the whole state of Montana—his population base is almost 50 percent larger than that of the typical House member. To complicate matters further, only Don Young of Alaska represents a larger geographical area. “It’s a real balancing act,” says Rehberg, a Republican. “I find that there’re three sides to every two-sided issue.”

It would be a lot easier representing all of these citizens if congressmen actually represented *citizens*. But they don’t, or at least not exclusively. Under the current rules of apportionment, the 435 House seats are divvied up on the basis of the total number of people living in each state—not just citizens, but also non-citizens and even illegal aliens. It’s hard to believe: People whose very presence in the United States is against the law are granted formal representation in Washington.

This is the root cause of Rehberg’s predicament. Montana doesn’t have a second congressional seat because so many illegal aliens live in places like California, which receives three extra representatives for the 2 million illegal aliens who call it home. And Montana isn’t the only loser in the zero-sum game of congressional apportionment. Indiana, Michigan, and Mississippi are also shy a seat in the House because of illegal aliens residing elsewhere, according to a new report by the Center for Immigration Studies.

Most Americans don’t realize that their democracy redistributes political power

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based on the settlement patterns of illegal aliens and other non-citizens. But these changes are significant enough to shuffle around a bunch of seats in the House of Representatives and perhaps even alter the outcome of a presidential election. If the next race for the White House is as close as the last one, it's possible that the federal government's practice of treating illegal aliens the same as citizens for purposes of apportionment will wind up costing George W. Bush the presidency.

The 2000 Census counted 18.5 million non-citizens, including an estimated 7 million illegal aliens. If these people were evenly distributed around the country, they would have no impact on how House seats are assigned. But immigrants tend to cluster in ethnic communities. Nearly 30 percent of America's non-citizens live in California, for example, compared with 12 percent of the total U.S. population. These non-citizens—most of them legal immigrants—are enough to boost the Golden State's congressional delegation by six whole members. Florida, New York, and Texas also gain one extra seat apiece because of their large non-citizen populations. Nine states lose out: Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Utah, and Wisconsin.

Aside from the compelling matter of principle involved, these apportionment schemes distort our politics in other ways: Democrats benefit. That's because non-citizen apportionment allows the creation of congressional districts full of people who don't have the right to vote—and Democrats almost always win in these places. Consider California's 31st congressional district, where 41 percent of the inhabitants are non-citizens. Last year, Xavier Becerra—one of the most left-wing members of Congress—carried it by attracting fewer than 55,000 votes, despite its population of 639,000. In many congressional districts, the winner needs two times this level of support. Steve Sailer of UPI crunched the numbers for California's whole delegation: In the eight districts won by Hispanics (all Democrats), an average of 80,000 voters went to the polls. In the other 45 districts, an aver-

age of 143,000 turned out—that's 79 percent more.

Racial gerrymandering compounds the problem. About 40 percent of the country's Hispanics are not citizens; packing as many of them as possible into single districts creates conglomerations of people who can't pick their representatives. In 18th-century England, parliamentary constituencies that had dwindled to just a handful of voters were labeled "rotten boroughs." Non-citizen apportionment has delivered something very much like this to our own shores, though we might call them "rotten barrios."

The corrupting influence of 'rotten barrios' may one day reach to the presidential level.

Their corrupting influence may one day reach to the presidential level. Here's an illustration of what may be at stake, based on the fact that a state's electoral votes are the sum of its two senators and the number of its House members. In the 2000 election, Bush earned 271 electoral votes to Al Gore's 267. If *any* of the states in Bush's column had gone the other way—including New Hampshire (4 electoral votes) or traditionally Democratic West Virginia (5)—we'd now be in the third year of the Gore administration.

Looking ahead, let's assume that Bush carries the same 30 states in 2004 as he did in 2000. Because this will be the first election following the 2000 Census reapportionment, Bush would collect 278 electoral votes from this same set of states. If both New Hampshire and West Virginia were to defect, Bush would most likely retire to his ranch in Crawford. But let's assume further that illegal aliens weren't counted in apportionment. In this scenario, Democrat-friendly California surrenders a bit of its political clout to Bush-country states like Indiana and Mississippi. The president's 30-state victory would earn him 280 electoral votes. Suddenly he could afford to lose both New Hampshire and West Virginia and still secure a second term. Because of illegal-alien apportionment, however, Bush now must prevail in at least one of these states (or replace their electoral votes with fresh wins elsewhere).

On the surface, this doesn't look like a tough problem to solve. Why not just

quit counting illegal aliens for apportionment? In 1989, the Senate actually passed a bill that would have excluded illegal aliens from apportionment calculations. In the House, Tom Ridge—then a Republican congressman from Pennsylvania, now secretary of homeland security—offered a similar measure. Democrats defeated it. If Ridge had been successful, however, it might not have mattered: The (first) Bush administration was threatening a veto because of the huge bureaucratic headache the law would have created just months before the decennial Census was scheduled to occur.

What's more, the states with large non-citizen populations want these non-voters to count toward apportionment, since it increases their political power. And when a state the size of California squares off against the likes of Montana in a clash of political interests, might usually equals right. "The result is a system in which states have a perverse incentive to attract immigrants, including illegal ones," says Noah Pickus of North Carolina's Institute for Emerging Issues.

Even if the political difficulties were surmounted and Congress altered apportionment calculations, however, legal hurdles would remain. The Fourteenth Amendment calls for apportioning representatives based on "the whole number of persons" in each state. Defenders of the status quo insist that this means everybody must count, regardless of his citizenship. They also like to point out that the Constitution previously has recognized the representation of the disenfranchised: Before the Civil War, each slave counted as three-fifths of a person. Yet this is a spurious claim. While it's true that being counted as fractional persons was an indignity to blacks, they would have been better off not being counted at all: It was the southern states, not the northern ones, that wanted their non-voting human property to count in apportionment schemes, as it boosted their political power.

Today, apportionment doesn't really include *everybody*. Foreign tourists, business travelers, and diplomats don't count, even if they're in the United States on the day the Census is taken. Yet counting illegal aliens has become the standard operating procedure, and so

anything that upsets it would produce a flock of messy lawsuits.

It's not realistic to hope that any of this can be corrected before next year—though making a change in time for the 2010 Census is probably achievable. Between now and then, the case for reform will only grow more convincing, as the non-citizen population continues to grow in the absence of major immigration reforms. "I wouldn't be surprised to see the next Census capture 2 million foreign students," says Steven Camarota of the Center for Immigration Studies. "A whole congressional district could move from one state to another simply because of foreigners pursuing degrees at American universities."

Of course, nothing will stop this unless a political leader decides to make a stand against non-citizen or illegal-alien apportionment. It won't be Congressman Rehberg. "I'm focused on a lot of other issues right now," he says. "Besides, they can't take away any more of Montana's seats." **NR**

■ RUSSIA

Putin's October Revolution

A scary time in Russia

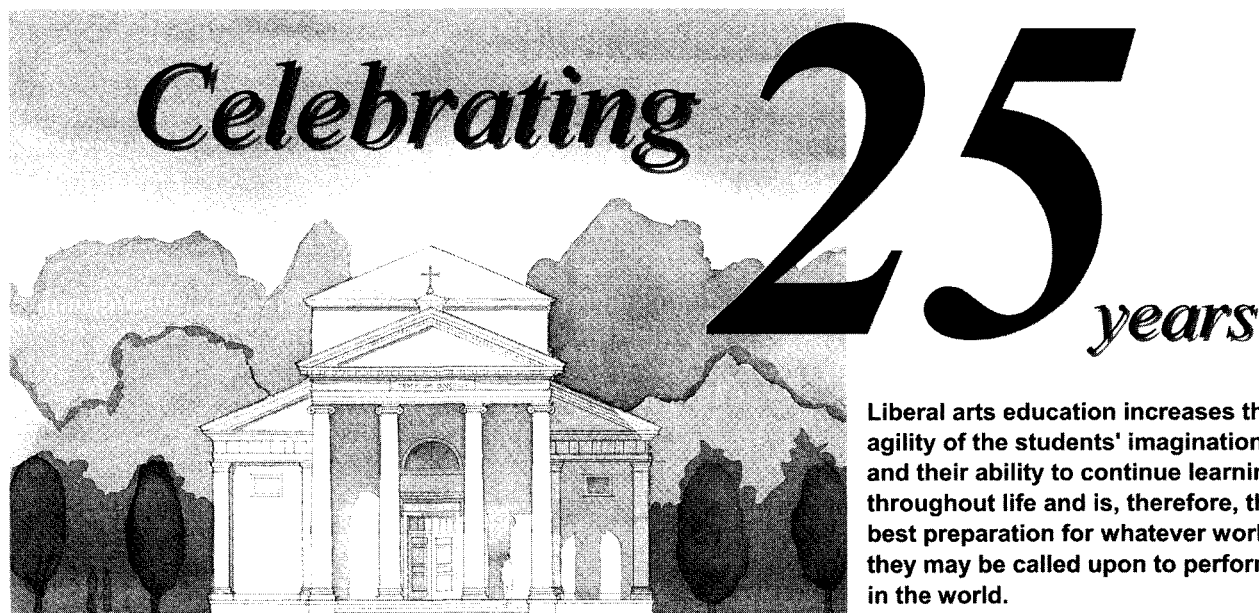
ADRIAN KARATNYCKY

IN the space of a few weeks in October, Vladimir Putin's Russia sent decisive signals to its population, to its neighbors, and to the world that the country is doing business in a new way. The contours of Putin's "October revolution" signal the ascendancy of the *siloviki*, the "power boys" from the security services and military who now dominate Russia's state elite.

At home, Putin's October revolution was signaled with the arrest of the country's richest man, oil magnate Mikhail Khodorkovsky, on charges of fraud and tax evasion. The arrest rocked domestic stock indices, which fell by 15 percent. Earlier in October, Russian authorities had raided an office of political consultants hired by the Yabloko party, one of several liberal groupings supported by Khodorkovsky. Just weeks before parliamentary elections, the raid was an ominous shot across the bow of parties in opposition to Putin. The Russian authorities followed up on Khodorkovsky's arrest by freezing 44 percent of the assets he and his associates controlled in the giant Yukos energy firm—raising fears about further state interference in the private sector.

On Russia's borders, a new hard line

Mr. Karatnycky, counselor and senior scholar at Freedom House, is co-editor of *Nations in Transit 2003: Democratization in East Central Europe and Eurasia* (Rowman & Littlefield).



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was also on display. Russia provoked a dispute, and precipitated a dangerous crisis, with neighboring Ukraine by unilaterally building a dam that encroaches on Ukraine's Tuzla island, in the strait separating the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov. The unexpected action was accompanied by the Kremlin's declaration that Tuzla, heretofore accepted by Russia as a part of Ukraine, was a disputed territory. The chairman of the Russian parliament's foreign-affairs committee declared that both Tuzla and the city of Sevastopol on Ukraine's Crimean peninsula were Russian. Ukraine's president, Leonid Kuchma, cut short a trip to Latin America to head back to the crisis zone as Ukraine rapidly deployed a unit of border guards and launched military exercises involving 17 Sukhoi-17 bombers.

On October 9, just days before the crisis with Ukraine, Russia's defense minister, Sergei Ivanov, unveiled a new, more assertive defense doctrine. Speaking in the company of President Putin and German chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, Ivanov declared that Russia reserves the right to intervene militarily in the former Soviet republics to settle disputes that cannot be resolved through negotiation. Putin chimed in to announce that Russia retains the prerogative to maintain the integrity of oil and gas pipelines built in the Soviet period—"even those parts of the system that are beyond Russia's borders."

And, as if to punctuate this new, more aggressive turn, on October 10, Russia's lower house of parliament, the Duma, passed the first reading of a bill on compulsory military training at schools and professional colleges. The new law means that, for the first time since the Soviet period, Russian education will be militarized.

The rapid pace of events has led to dramatic headlines in what remains of Russia's independent press. (National broadcast media, television in particular, are almost completely controlled by the Kremlin since the takeover of three independent networks, the last—TVS—in June of this year.) "The law-enforcement bodies have seized power," declared Russia's *Novaya Gazeta* newspaper in the days following Khodorkovsky's arrest. And a group of the country's most respected human-rights voices—including the eminent historian Yuri Afanasyev, Soviet-era dissident Ludmilla Alekseyeva, and

sociologist Yuri Levada—warned of the serious ramifications of the Khodorkovsky case for the rule of law and argued that now "only civic resistance can withstand [the turn toward] arbitrary rule."

What accounts for this sharp turn toward belligerent autocracy? The answer lies in dramatic changes that have occurred in the Russian leadership. In the nearly four years he has been in office, Putin has quietly orchestrated a revolution in the upper reaches of the Russian state. According to Olga Kryzhanovskaya, a Moscow-based social scientist who studies the Russian elite, Putin is filling an ever-increasing number of ministerial and other high-level government posts with personnel from the military-security sector. Since 2000, over a third of senior appointments in the economic, transport, communications, property, and trade ministries have been filled with security-service and military men. Today, over a quarter of Russia's highest-ranking officials are graduates of military academies. This "militocracy" has supplanted a Yeltsin-era elite of civilian officials holding graduate and professional degrees: down from 50 percent of state leaders to 20 percent today. Many from the militocracy are now the country's chief parliamentarians and serve in key posts within Putin's United Russia political party. Moreover, the military-security crowd now represents over 70 percent of the leadership in Russia's federal districts.

Putin's security and military types were never subject to thoroughgoing internal reform nor directly affected by the social and political upheaval that convulsed the Soviet Union and Russia. They functioned in the hermetically detached environments of the military and security services, which were largely bypassed by civic democratic reforms.

The militocracy's rise to power—gradual but unrelenting—has now reached critical mass. And the October events in Russia's political life represent their political triumph. All this is not to say they have come to power with a well-thought-out agenda. Indeed, they have not yet provided any answers on how to tackle Russia's wrenching problems of poverty. But this group, with its authoritarian inclinations and faith in top-down diktat, for the first time faces no serious forces that can balance or mute its power.

Russia's broadcast media are now almost exclusively providing a pro-Putin line. Russian economic magnates—who were emerging as a force that backed some free-market liberal parties—are now cowed by the prosecution of Khodorkovsky and other magnates who tangled with Putin and are unlikely to exert an independent influence on political life. And civil society, while developing, remains relatively weak.

In these circumstances, what should the West do? One tempting answer might be: nothing. After all, Russia appears to be cooperating rhetorically in the war on terrorism. And Russia is hardly in a position to be particularly threatening to the U.S. and Europe: Last year, its GDP was 30 percent smaller than that of the Netherlands. Still, Russia's power relative to that of its weak neighbors is considerable. If Russia has the economic might of Holland, Ukraine—with a population of nearly 50 million—has a GDP roughly equal to that of the Dominican Republic and Guatemala combined. And the economies of other post-Soviet republics are far smaller. This gives rise to plenty of potential for the reestablishment of Russian hegemony, especially in the absence of significant U.S. and European engagement.

Moreover, while Russia is hardly a global economic power, its geo-economic significance is magnified by its role as a major global supplier of oil and natural gas. And geopolitically, Russia remains a nuclear power with a formidable conventional military capability. It is therefore worrisome that many in Russia's new military-security leadership group hold aggressive attitudes on foreign and security policy; resent American power; dream of the revival of Russian hegemony over Ukraine, the Caucasus, and Central Asia; and support arms sales to states like Iran. A belligerent Russia left unchecked could badly miscalculate and—given its vast military capability—con-



tribute to a tragedy that would make the horrific Balkan wars pale in significance.

There are ample reasons for worry, and thus a strong case for intelligent engagement. On the domestic side, Russia's immediate democratic future, while bleak, is not completely hopeless. Russia's ruling elite still derives its legitimacy from popular consent. And while Putin's personal popularity remains high, and his moves against Russia's wealthy are likely to be rewarded in the elections of December and March, public opinion can turn even in Putin's authoritarian version of "managed democracy." This is why U.S. and Western policy should focus on material support for Russia's civil society, and a vocal defense of the country's remaining free press. The West should also make it clear to Russia that entry into the World Trade Organization will be contingent on respect for property rights in the context of an independent judiciary.

Of equal importance will be unified Western efforts to minimize the impact of Russia's hard-line turn against neighbor-

ing countries. With NATO having successfully absorbed many states on Russia's Western flank, weak countries like Ukraine and Georgia will be increasingly vulnerable to Russian economic pressure and unilateral power politics. To reduce and counterbalance such pressures, the U.S. and the EU will need to offer Ukraine and the Caucasus states diplomatic support and targeted economic assistance. And they should keep open the prospect of eventual integration into Western institutions, including NATO, provided these states pursue a democratic and free-market path. Above all, the U.S. and its European allies should closely monitor the dangerous Russia-Ukraine dispute simmering around the island of Tuzla and insist on the internationalization of any negotiations.

Vladimir Putin and his KGB cronies may have gained the upper hand in the struggle for the Russian state. But they have not yet transformed Russia into an autocracy. Whether they succeed will depend on how we and the Russian people now react. **NR**

■ CULTURE WATCH

When Crime Hits Home . . .

. . . pretensions fall away—even in France

THEODORE DALRYMPLE

No one is so liberal that he does not wish to visit condign punishment upon at least one criminal or class of criminals.

No one is so compassionate that his understanding is incapable of giving way to the desire for vengeance. It is as if the desire to punish and exact revenge were genetic, part of human nature, like the propensity

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to walk on two legs or learn to speak.

This summer, France was transfixed by the murder of a well-known actress, Marie Trintignant, herself the daughter of a well-known film director, Nadine Trintignant. She was killed by her boyfriend of a few months, the French rock-music star Bertrand Cantat. Marie was in Lithuania with her mother, shooting a film about the life of the French author Colette, when Cantat joined her there. In the course of a drunken argument in a hotel bedroom in Vilnius, Cantat hit her savagely in the face several times. She fell into a coma; he put her to bed, and then went to sleep himself. The next morning, he called her brother, who was also in Vilnius; when the severity of Marie's condition became obvious, Cantat took an overdose. Despite two operations, Marie died about a week later. Cantat awaits his trial in Vilnius.

Both the Trintignant family and Cantat himself were darlings of the Left. They not only knew all the best people, but held all the best opinions. Cantat in particular, whose group, the most successful in France, was called *Noir Désir* (Black Desire), was vocal in support of "good" causes. His heart bled for Palestinians, whales, and the *sans papiers*, the illegal immigrants in France. He did not hesitate to turn publicly on the hand that fed him handsomely, accusing the company that had made him a millionaire many times over of exploitation. He found it far easier, and no doubt more important, to evince concern about the whole world in the abstract than to behave decently toward the woman in his bedroom.

It was pretty clear from the outset that Cantat's savagery was the result of his jealousy. Marie Trintignant had had children by three other men, with whom she kept amicably in touch. Cantat wanted her to sever relations with these men; indeed, as with many men of his jealous type, he wanted her to sever relations with everyone but himself. He wanted to be the center of her existence.

This is the kind of sordid story that I hear every day of my working life: In the last few years I have interviewed about

5,000 men who have beaten women, principally motivated by jealousy, and 5,000 women who have been beaten by such men (incidentally, women are also becoming more jealously violent). Of course, murder is still comparatively rare, but partial strangulation is common, as are other forms of extreme violence. I was not surprised to learn that Marie Trintignant bore the marks of strangulation around her neck, as well as marks of blows that the pathologist likened to the impact of being hurled into a wall at 125 miles per hour.

Marie Trintignant's mother, Nadine, has just published a moving short book called *Ma fille, Marie*, addressed to her dead daughter. She cannot bring herself to mention Cantat by name, always referring to him as "your murderer." The mother blames herself for not having taken notice of the signs that Cantat was dangerous. On one occasion, Marie sent her a telephone text message signed "*Fifille battue*" (Beaten Little Girl). Marie's mother took this to be metaphorical: She could not imagine that her daughter was actually being beaten, though there were other signs that in retrospect are ominous. For example, Marie's mood changed; she became more distant from people to whom she had previously been close; she would grow nervous if separated from Cantat for too long; to appease Cantat's anger, she tried to cut out the love scenes in a film she was making.

Not surprisingly, Nadine Trintignant can hardly contain her bitterness and rage against Cantat. Is there anyone who would not sympathize with her? She sees no extenuating circumstances at all in Cantat's conduct. When evil invades her own life, to understand all is suddenly not to forgive all. She discovers that Cantat had behaved in similar fashion toward other women, some of whom had to go to the hospital after his beatings, none of which ever led to legal action against him. As she herself points out, had his previous victims insisted upon such action—had he been imprisoned for a long time as he deserved—her daughter might still be alive today. It is clear that she wants him punished, and in prison for the rest of his life, not only to prevent him from ever committing a similar crime, but for the sake of revenge, or justice; she doesn't

actually say so, but I don't think she would protest too loudly if the death penalty were still in force in Lithuania.

What is striking about her book, which is obviously sincere, is that she makes no attempt in it to distance herself, by intellectualization, from her natural and very deep feelings. She does not, for example, claim that Cantat is a victim, too—there being good sociological and psychological reasons why morbid jealousy is much more common than it once was, reasons for which Cantat himself could not possibly be held responsible. Where the general sexual mores are freewheeling, where there is little or no formal structure in relations between the sexes, extreme jealousy is bound to increase, at least so long as people desire the exclusive sexual possession of one another. Fidelity and promiscuity are not compatible. Since Cantat did not choose the sexual mores of the society into which he was born, his jealousy was not his fault—or so the argument goes.

The structure of this argument against Cantat's personal responsibility for his acts is precisely the same as that offered by liberal reformers in the past 50 years.

Fidelity and promiscuity are not compatible.

Burglars and muggers supposedly cannot help burgling and mugging, because they have come from disadvantaged homes, or an unjust society, or are drug-addicted, and therefore their desire for illicit gain is not their responsibility, and

therefore punishment of them is morally wrong. It is the kind of argument that liberals use because they never expect to be the victims of crime themselves. They do not forgive those who trespass against them as much as those who trespass against others: the latter being, on balance, rather easier to forgive.

When, however, the crime is close to home—when the victim is not some nameless denizen of a distant and unfashionable area, but a loved one—then the whole pretense, the charade of sympathetic understanding, falls away. Cantat did what he did because he was a bad, or even an evil, man. He was an agent, not a vector of forces or a victim of circumstances. Gone is the language of sociology, of criminology, of economics: Only the language of morality now suffices. And only condign punishment counts as justice.

Mr. Dalrymple is a physician and psychiatrist who works in a British prison. He is also a contributing editor of *City Journal*, and the author of *Life at the Bottom: The Worldview That Makes the Underclass*.

The vengeful liberal reaction to a crime committed against oneself or a loved one, perfectly natural in itself, establishes that the liberal is fundamentally a believer in the government of men, not of laws. What counts for him is the identity of the victim of the crime, and the victim's relationship to himself. He is quite content to let whole neighborhoods, whole cities, indeed whole countries be submerged in crime, so long as it does not affect him personally. Until he or a loved one becomes a victim, his reputation for broadmindedness is all that matters.

The liberal attitude can survive only by a refusal to take the lives of others seriously. The crime that Cantat committed in particularly gruesome and brutal fashion is in fact extremely commonplace, though not perhaps in the circles in which the Trintignants moved. It is the more commonplace the farther down the social scale you descend, though it can occur at any social level. But the fact that such crimes are more commonplace at the lowest

social levels is not a reason for ignoring them when they occur there, or for judging them by standards different from those by which Nadine Trintignant now judges Cantat. On the contrary, it is precisely at the lowest social levels that the law should be most vigilant, because it is at those levels that the protection of self-restraint is likely to be weakest.

In other words, the liberal is the inveterate enemy of the poor, happy to sacrifice them on the altar of costless generosity. And when I say that Nadine Trintignant is bitter, that her book is filled with hatred for Cantat that almost trembles from the page, I mean it as no criticism. Could the mother of any daughter beaten mercilessly to death by her jealous lover feel otherwise? But why is it that only the bitterness of the rich and privileged victims of crime deserves to be listened to, and not that of the inhabitants of slums? That is a question I have often asked my liberal friends, and I have yet to receive a satisfactory answer. **NR**

■ IN APPRECIATION

Witnesses

A Greatest Generation of anti-Communists

JOHN DERBYSHIRE

THE year now coming to its end has marked the centenary of three fine British anti-Communist writers: Evelyn Waugh, George Orwell, and Malcolm Muggeridge. Each tried his hand at different kinds of writing, but I do not think it seriously unfair to tag them by the work they are best known for—as, respectively, a novelist, an essayist, and a journalist. All three writers lived among contemporaries held in thrall by the illusion of progress and social justice in the Soviet Union. All

**National Review Editor Rich Lowry's Stinging
Indictment of the Clinton Presidency**

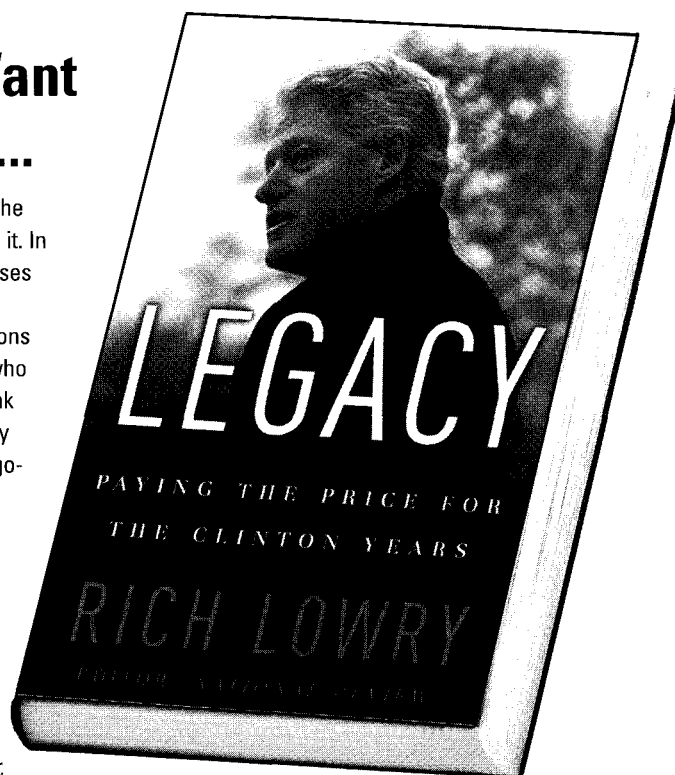
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saw through that illusion very early. They were, you might say, premature anti-Communists.

It is not altogether coincidence that three of the West's clearest voices for reason and liberty were born in precisely the same year. The observers best placed to witness, and reflect on, the tremendous events of the 20th century's first half were the generation that came of age in the aftermath of WWI, Western civilization's greatest crisis. To have been born in the early years of that century; to have had one's childhood memories formed before the cataclysm; to have entered adolescence as the war was being fought; to have seen the shattered, disoriented post-war world with the receptive eyes of early adulthood—to have been part of that demographic cohort was to have had a grandstand seat at one of history's most gripping spectacles.

One of the commonest trajectories for this "witness generation" passed into, and then out of, an infatuation with Communism. Muggeridge lost his illusions earlier than most, as a result of spending the winter of 1932–33 in Moscow. If Orwell ever was enamored of Communism, his eyes were opened by the opportunism and cruelty of Stalin's agents in the Spanish Civil War. Arthur Koestler, born in 1905, tells us he resigned from the Party in 1938 because of Spain, though he did not completely lose faith in the USSR until the Nazi-Soviet pact a year later. That pact was the breaking-point for many—notably James Burnham, another member of the 1905 cohort. Also from that cohort was the French writer Raymond Aron, whose book *The Opium of the Intellectuals* (1955) was described by Roger Kimball as "an indispensable contribution to that most patient and underrated of literatures, the literature of intellectual disabusement." Those whose faith was deeper hung on for longer: Frank Meyer, born in 1909, described himself as a "dedicated communist" until 1945, and a "doctrinaire socialist" for some years afterward. Not until 1952 did he vote Republican for the first time.

Not all of this witness generation fell into the category of the disabused. Evelyn Waugh seems never to have felt the slightest attraction to any variety of leftist thought. His published writings

take on Marxism mainly from a Catholic point of view, but as Donat Gallagher remarks in his notes to *The Essays, Articles and Reviews of Evelyn Waugh*, "[H]e had been a conservative before he became a Roman Catholic, and his conservatism developed independently of his religion." (Waugh converted to Catholicism in 1930.) By 1944, when he was supposed to be assisting in British liaison efforts with the Communist partisans of Croatia, Waugh had, according to his brother officer the Earl of Birkenhead, advanced to such a "detestation of communism" that he could not bear to be in the same room as a partisan. Says Birkenhead dryly: "One could not fail to recognise that holding these views so strongly, he could be of little, if any use as a liaison officer with communist allies."

Waugh's case illustrates the point that it was not only the year of one's birth that helped determine one's perspective on events, but also the place. For Europeans, especially Jewish Europeans like Koestler and Aron, taking sides was not a matter of mere intellectual inclination, but was pressed on one by circumstances. Koestler, at age 13, lived through the Hungarian "hundred days"—Béla Kún's Red commune of 1919—and lost schoolfellows to the fascist reaction that followed. He notes a key development from the period: In the war and the post-war disturbances, urban bourgeois like his family became closely acquainted with working-class people for the first time.

In 1919, the intelligentsia suddenly discovered the suburban [*sic*—factories and workers' housing were built in a ring around central Budapest] proletariat as he really was in flesh and blood and sweat; and this discovery opened a flood of generous impulses and new vistas of human fraternity.

In Britain it was possible to maintain some detachment for a few years longer. During his time at Oxford in the mid 1920s, Waugh seems not to have thought about politics at all. Orwell, at Eton during and after WWI, testifies to the willful indifference of his classmates to the great events taking place across the Channel: "Among the very young, the pacifist reaction had set in long before the war

ended. To be as slack as you dared on O.T.C. [Officer Training Corps] parades, and to take no interest in the war, was considered a mark of enlightenment." He goes on to note that the war dead soon had their revenge: "As the war fell back into the past, my particular generation, those who had been 'just too young,' became conscious of the vastness of the experience they had missed . . ." It was probably not until the National Strike of 1926 that leftist ideology took a serious hold among thoughtful young British people.

In the United States, the disruption caused by the war was less, and the post-war clamor for new social arrangements was soon overwhelmed by the prosperity of the Harding-Coolidge years. Only when the Great Depression arrived did American intellectuals sign up for Communism in large numbers (though Whittaker Chambers, born 1901, had joined the Party in 1924. Frank Meyer joined while studying in Britain in 1931).

In 1949, six ex-Communist intellectuals recorded their personal disabusement in *The God That Failed*. Of the six, four had birth dates between 1900 and 1909: Arthur Koestler, Ignazio Silone, Richard Wright, and Stephen Spender. The book was born out of a conversation between Koestler and British social democrat Richard Crossman (a 1907 baby), most particularly out of a remark by Koestler that "[Y]ou comfortable, insular, Anglo-Saxon anti-communists . . . hate our Cassandra cries and resent us as allies—but, when all is said, we ex-communists are the only people on your side who know what it's all about."

Although this is all ancient history now, humanity has not yet managed to shed the weaknesses and temptations that led so many of the witness generation astray. Gullibility, misplaced idealism, an essentially romantic cast of mind toward the wretched of the earth—a "poetic" style of politics, Aron would have said, as opposed to the more useful, but less exciting, "prosaic" style of bourgeois democracy—all are still with us. As the present decade rolls along and the centenarians click by, we should remember, and pay tribute to, that Greatest Generation of anti-Communists—and give thanks for so many clear-eyed witnesses having been born at the right time. **NR**

THEN AND NOW

**There are great differences between Vietnam and Iraq,
and there are certain similarities, and all must be weighed**

VICTOR DAVIS HANSON

V IETNAM! Vietnam! The mere mention of it still sends shudders through Americans—and for that very reason it is alluded to almost weekly in the columns of Maureen Dowd, Molly Ivins, Paul Krugman, et al. After all, Vietnam was purportedly our Sicilian expedition, with 58,000 American soldiers dead, \$150 billion spent, a country torn apart in a decade of protest, and, at the end, defeat and the vow “never again” to send American ground troops to wars in far-off lands about which we know little. Yet here we are again with televised images of foreign irregulars toting RPGs and killing Americans while Europeans advise us to get out and avoid their all-too-familiar “colonial” mistakes.

Is Iraq anything like the debacle of Vietnam—an impossible situation in which almost all the odds were heavily stacked against the United States? So far, the resemblance rests mostly with those who invoke it. The protest generation that in 1968 was 20, on campus, and angry is now 55, worried about 401(k)s, but also entrenched in the universities, media, and government. Once again they are increasingly furious that we are at war. Familiar critics have reemerged—now aging—ready for one last muster at the barricades. In lieu of the photogenic Eugene McCarthy, there is the maverick Howard Dean, similarly poised to triumph in the New Hampshire primary by promising to pull the troops out. Today’s Democratic senators are as shaky about their past votes for American action in Iraq as their forebears were about signing on to Vietnam.

Noam Chomsky, Norman Mailer, and Gore Vidal still roam, long in the tooth, but still with suitably perverse things to say. Peter Arnett went from reporting the unsubstantiated but famous quip about Ben Tre (“It became necessary to destroy the town to save it”) to broadcasting live from Baghdad—before being fired for comments that were a little too sympathetic to the enemy.

Mr. Hanson’s most recent book is *Ripples of Battle: How Wars of the Past Still Determine How We Fight, How We Live, and How We Think*.

Seymour Hersh and David Halberstam (who authored *Ho*, a sympathetic biography of the Communist tyrant) periodically weigh in with either sensationalist muckraking or the characteristic gloom of the past. For Jane Fonda in Hanoi we have Sean Penn in pre-war Baghdad. For every clownish and repugnant Abbie Hoffman or Jerry Rubin there is now a similarly foul-mouthed—but far wealthier and cagier—Michael Moore or Al Franken. The wild scenes from the sit-ins and moratoriums find their carnival counterparts among A.N.S.W.E.R. and Not in Our Name.

The parallels seem unavoidable. After all, America is once again fighting an unconventional war far from home, with plenty of foreign critics—and at election time, with Democratic presidential contenders alleging that Saddam’s weapons program was as phony a *casus belli* as the Gulf of Tonkin incident. Our television screens, reminiscent of 1968, show scenes of mayhem and chaos in two-second images, while our Iraqi supporters, like the South Vietnamese, seem either unable or unwilling to take the fight to the enemy.

DISTINCTIONS WITH A DIFFERENCE

Close examination reveals these parallels to be mostly superficial, however. The first false analogy rests with matters of degree and scale. So far, we have lost not 58,000 lives, but a little over 400 combat dead in two years of fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq. During our almost eight years on the ground in Vietnam, we averaged not twelve fatalities per week but over twelve times that number. By 1968, our enemies had mobilized almost 2 million Vietcong and North Vietnamese troops, along with thousands of Soviet and Chinese advisers. Saddam’s loyalists, in contrast, are perhaps no more than 5,000 dedicated fighters. The Sunni Triangle, where 95 percent of the attacks on Americans take place, is a fraction of the size of South Vietnam. There is no Hanoi in this war, as Saddam lost his capital in 21 days.

Our enemies are far different as well. True, Ho Chi Minh was a killer with the blood of hundreds of thousands on his hands from

his brutal collectivization programs. But he still managed to come across as a romantic, grandfatherly figure who appealed to naïve idealists the world over. In contrast, Saddam Hussein was hated at home and abroad. Baathism, having long ago jettisoned its socialist roots, never had the resonance that Communism—with its pretensions about economic justice—had with poor and elite alike.

So there are no posters of Saddam or Osama bin Laden in college dormitories, and little likelihood of a mass uprising in Iraq to bring back the Baathists. If Parisian intellectuals once more want us to lose, it is still not quite clear that they really want al-Qaeda and the Saddamites to win. After all, even the French are starting to recognize a general and consistent pattern in who is doing the blowing up and who is being blown up in places such as Pakistan, Bali, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Grozny, Jerusalem, Baghdad—and Paris.

With the specter of Vietnam constantly present, we are also not as naïve as we were going into Vietnam, which followed the startling success of World War II.

The geopolitical situation is equally different. During the conflict with Vietnam, American options were carefully circumscribed by a nuclear Soviet Union and China. Both were neighbors of the Vietnamese and both made it clear that there might be repercussions should the United States invade and topple the North Vietnamese government—the only real way to end the war. Even the flight paths of American bombers were designed not to antagonize our irrational global rivals, who in turn were free to send to Hanoi their advisers and matériel. True, Syria and Iran are aiding our enemies, but so far only haphazardly—since they as yet possess no nuclear deterrence to prevent a massive American counter-response. Saudi money and Saddam's cash are not comparable to the Soviet bloc's funding and abetting of our enemies in Vietnam. Now Russia has its hands full with its own Muslim killers and wants no part in promoting our enemies' pan-Islamic agenda.

Tactically, the cities and open deserts of Iraq are not the dense jungles and remote villages of Vietnam. What's more, the latter was a decade-long, indecisive war; the present fighting is the chaotic aftermath of a three-week victory that toppled the ruling government. Iraq is not a divided country, but rather contains pockets of diehards surrounded by unsympathetic Kurds and Shiites—who for the most part support the U.S. effort to subdue the remnants of Hussein's regime. The enemy relies on a finite supply of stockpiled weaponry and cash, not daily infusions through a port like Haiphong or a steady, stealthy stream of trucks over the Ho Chi Minh Trail. We are rightly wary of waging another high-tech conventional war against low-tech enemies. That being said, the large supply of everything from night-vision goggles and body armor to GPS bombs and Abrams tanks serves American troops well. Targets are more unobstructed and bombs are far more accurate than in Vietnam. Counterinsurgency, asymmetrical warfare, and fourth-dimensional or postmodern

war are not trendy catchphrases, but 30-year-old realities for the U.S. military.

Politically, the parallels at first may seem ominous, inasmuch as the American presence is as obtrusive and resented in Iraq as it was in South Vietnam. Neither country, after all, had a tradition of democracy or anything resembling government by consent. And it is always easier to destroy a dictatorship than to create a democracy; a few hardcore enemy fanatics are usually more dynamic than a silent majority of supporters. But the depressing political similarity between the two wars is—once again—superficial: How can we judge our progress in creating a democratic alternative after so little time? At least our efforts in urging elections now are clearly democratic and not utilitarian—and thus not so vulnerable to charges of hypocrisy and cynicism as was our backing of a strongman like South Vietnamese president Nguyen Van Thieu solely

because of his staunch anti-Communism. "Iraqization" is proceeding in our first, not our sixth, year of ground fighting. Moreover, the pragmatism of John Foster Dulles is mostly gone. Our recent record is not one of backing anti-Communist authoritarians, but of rooting out dictators and insisting on elections in places like Panama, Serbia, and Afghanistan.

A DIFFERENT UNITED STATES

September 11, 2001, started a hot, not a cold, war. Saddam's Iraq—as we are seeing more confirmation of each day—was connected to the terrorists, whose killers incinerated 3,000 Americans in the worst attack on American shores in our history. Thus, millions in the United States see the toppling of Saddam Hussein as integral to the war on the Middle Eastern terrorists who struck at us first—unlike Vietnam, which we were never really sure was a domino critical to the spread of global Communism. With the specter of Vietnam constantly present, we are also not as naïve as we were going into Vietnam, which followed the startling success of World War II.

Here at home, we are in the midst of another hotly contested election. As in 1968 and 1972, the Democratic primary is beginning to hinge on the war, with every bit as much slurring of George W. Bush as that dished out to Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon. But, unlike with Vietnam, few credible Democratic candidates urge cutting off funding for a war that some of them voted for. The various Senate amendments that denied funding for air support of the beleaguered South Vietnamese—ending the American determination to enforce the 1973 Paris peace accords in the face of Communist violations and invasion—were blowback from the Watergate scandals, when President Nixon's crimes and political impotence emboldened the anti-war opposition. George W. Bush's Republicans, in contrast, won an impressive off-year election. For all the Democratic efforts to taint the

administration with Halliburton and Bechtel or faked reports of WMD, we are a long way from the plumbers, the "Saturday night massacre," "I'm not a crook," and presidential tape-recording. The final defeat in Vietnam is inexplicable apart from Watergate.

Thus far even Candidates Dean, Kerry, and Clark sense that the public wants harping and venting rather than quitting, and so they quite opportunistically damn our efforts while making no concrete attempt to stop them. Donald Rumsfeld is facing a firestorm of criticism, as his detractors cry that he is the bottom-line CEO Robert McNamara come alive. Hardly: Rumsfeld is not an idealistic forty-something technocrat, but a 71-year-old veteran of the job, and wants not more but fewer troops in the theater.

The calling-up of National Guardsmen—the great bugbear of Vietnam-era politics—has already occurred in massive numbers and without much opposition, which may explain the hesitancy of the Democrats to short-circuit the war. Nor is the current anti-war movement the nexus of broad-based racial, sexual, and class unrest that it was during Vietnam. The protesters who turn up at A.N.S.W.E.R. rallies are not pressing for the passage of civil-rights legislation or equal pay for equal work, but rather for fringe causes such as independence for Puerto Rico and the release of the cop-killer and honorary citizen of Paris Mumia Abu-Jamal. In short, the United States is a far more stable society than it was in 1968—and this time young people are far more likely than their grandparents to support this war.

TRUE PARALLELS AND THEIR LESSONS

But does the fact that Iraq is not really analogous to the military situation in Vietnam mean that our eventual victory is assured? Not quite. To understand why we should still worry about winning Iraq, we must remember two salient facts about losing Vietnam, a war far more formidable than our present conflict. First, the war dragged on for a decade because of America's inability or unwillingness consistently to bring to bear its full power against the enemy. Second, the fighting took place while America was not psychologically prepared for the burdens of conflict.

On very few occasions did we embrace the tactics needed to win the Vietnam War: bombing key targets in the North, crossing the DMZ in force, and hunting down the Vietcong through counterinsurgency teams in the South. This time around there is no Soviet Union or nuclear China quietly setting the parameters of our fighting, but that does not mean that other forces—mostly self-created—have not once more emerged to curtail the American response. The U.S. military realizes that, in an age of instant global communication, for every Iraqi civilian mistakenly killed or house bombed, there is a host of print and television journalists eager to allege deliberate American culpability. Already, fear of such distortion in a war of public relations has put a damper on our military, which for the first six months after the war seemed more interested in winning world approval for sobriety and restraint than in killing

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hundreds, if not thousands, of recalcitrant Baathist murderers.

The ironclad laws of war, however, remind us that the ease of post-bellum reconstruction and reconciliation is directly proportionate to the degree of pain and humiliation inflicted on the enemy, which, in the case of the hardcore Baathists, for the most part fled and melted away rather than be killed or captured—an unpleasant fact not always recognized by Americans. Moreover, if the use of force is a priori always a bad idea, if America is always suspected of lying, cheating, or exploiting when it goes to war, and if public and private careers are predicated on restraining the use of American power through prognostication of both its failure and its amorality, then the dissemination of the news itself becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. And if, as happened during Vietnam, our leaders have no long-term vision of what we can and must do, they can easily become captives of news-driven and mercurial polls—a recipe for floundering and defeat.

The second cause for concern—that Americans are not ready, psychologically, for war—can be seen across the culture. Just as an overconfident America never declared war or mobilized the full extent of its military capability in Vietnam, so too after the first Gulf War, Serbia, and Afghanistan we have come to expect that about 150,000 professional soldiers can rout the enemy while the rest of us attend to *Sex and the City* and *Jackass: The Movie*. We are quibbling about the scope of our commitment, whether we disbanded the Iraqi army too early, whether we have too many

Vietnam teaches us that when we confront such terrible foes only half-heartedly, the resulting stalemate can quickly turn to quagmire and then defeat—with dire repercussions for decades.

REMEMBERING TET

Finally, of all of Vietnam's many sad chapters, none is more instructive than that of the 1968 Tet offensive: a dramatic American military victory that was reinvented into a terrible nightmare. Walter Cronkite may have returned from Vietnam to announce from on high that "the only rational way out . . . will be to negotiate, not as victors, but as an honorable people." Yet despite a massive surprise attack during a holiday truce, the first stage of the fighting in Saigon was essentially over in a little less than a month. By the end of February 1968, the city of Huế was freed; in early April, the base at Khe Sanh was relieved. Public-opinion polls continued to show that a majority of Americans supported involvement all through Tet. Nearly 50,000 Vietcong and NVA regulars were killed in a few weeks; in all the various theaters of Tet, fewer than 2,000 Americans were lost. More of the enemy died in the single year of 1968 than all of the Americans lost throughout the entire decade of the conflict. The Communist strategy of bringing local cadres into the streets proved an unmitigated disaster. Far from causing a general insurrection, Tet ended in a bloodbath, destroying the Vietcong infrastructure in the South for at least two years. After Tet, there was no effective military arm of the National Liberation Front left.

Vietnam teaches us that when we confront terrible foes only half-heartedly, the resulting stalemate can quickly turn to quagmire and then defeat.

Baathists in our employment, whether elections should be now or later . . . and, all the while, our vast resources to defeat the enemy and finish the war go virtually untapped.

The Baathists know that they cannot defeat America. Nor can the fundamentalists, despite bin Laden's pop-philosophizing about strong and weak horses. But, like the Vietcong, they sense that their grotesque killing can finally get under the skin of complacent Americans, long enough for them to sigh, "Can't it simply go away?" Our post-war enemies know that they will lose a Khe Sanh, Gulf War I, or Baghdad showdown where American firepower blows our enemies to smithereens, and so they look instead to Tet and Mogadishu, and hope one dead GI for 25 of them will shake America to its core.

In response, we must remember that our enemy is not really the Taliban or the Baathists, but rather, as in Vietnam, an ideology—one that kills now in Bali, now in Morocco, sometimes in Baghdad, at other times in Kandahar or Istanbul. In short, we are in a struggle for our very values and way of life, against enemies cruel and clever who seek to rid civilization and its influence from a great part of the world, so that in the decades ahead they can do even greater harm to us. They will kill us in Manhattan, Washington, and pretty much anywhere else—or die trying.

Yet this stunning American victory was not followed up with a final push. Indeed, General Giap's military catastrophe proved a political windfall to the Communists, confirming their hunch that televised images of Vietcong dying on the grounds of the American embassy in Saigon and their troops' killing of one American for every 25 Communists lost could be reported to the American people as proof of the hopelessness of the cause, thus sapping the will of the Johnson administration. And that was precisely what happened—even though polls continued to show conclusively that a clear majority of Americans felt the problem was not getting out of Vietnam, but rather conducting the war forcefully enough to win.

Last April we achieved a miraculous military victory in Iraq. Somehow, we are already crafting a consensual government after thirty years of chaos. Indeed, the American success in Iraq, despite the tragedy of 400 dead, is nearly unprecedented in the recent history of the Middle East. This is not Vietnam. That nightmare will only return if this administration loses its nerve, fails to mobilize the public behind a just cause, listens to its hysterical critics, and vacillates, thereby convincing Americans that, once again, our leaders have gotten us into a war that we do not really wish to win.

NR

Whose Constitution Is It, Anyway?

Supreme Court justices are importing foreign law, signaling a historic and deplorable shift

ROBERT H. BORK

WHAT is going on here? Justice Sandra Day O'Connor in a recent speech said that decisions of other countries' courts could be persuasive authority in American courts. At a time when 30 percent of the U.S. gross national product is internationally derived, she said, "no institution of government can afford to ignore the rest of the world."

She is by no means alone on the Supreme Court. Six of that Court's nine members have either written or joined in opinions citing foreign authorities. The most astonishing, or risible, so far was Justice Stephen Breyer's opinion arguing that he found "useful" in interpreting our Constitution decisions by the Privy Council of Jamaica, and the Supreme Courts of India and Zimbabwe. Jamaica and India are far-fetched enough. But Zimbabwe—the country devastated by the blood-stained dictator Robert Mugabe! We might as well learn our constitutional law from Saddam Hussein's Iraq or Fidel Castro's Cuba.

Since the mid 1950s we have been in a third great period of constitution-making. Unlike the first two (1787 to 1791 and 1865 to 1870), this one is the work of judges, which achieves efficiency by cutting out the middlemen, the American people acting through their state conventions and legislatures. The efficiency gain is clear, but those hung up on technicalities complain of a lack of legitimacy. Justice Scalia commented on one of the Supreme Court's more imaginative improvements on the Founders' work: "Day by day, case by case, [the Court] is busy designing a Constitution for a country I do not recognize."

Yet even Scalia at his gloomiest probably did not foresee that the new country might be designed bit by bit from European, Asian, and African models. In *Lawrence v. Texas*, the decision creating a constitutional right to homosexual sodomy, Justice Kennedy cited a decision of the European Court of Human Rights. In a concurring opinion in *Grutter v. Bollinger*, a case upholding a law

school's minority preferences in admissions, Justice Ginsburg, joined by Justice Breyer, rejoiced that the decision was in line with the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. In *Thompson v. Oklahoma*, Justice John Paul Stevens, writing for four members of a divided Court, cited the approval "by other nations that share our Anglo-American heritage, and by the leading members of the Western European Community," as well as foreign legislation and three human-rights treaties, two of which had not been ratified by the United States.

DOWN FROM OLYMPUS

We should not have been taken unaware by this absurd turn in our jurisprudence. Most members of the Court belong to that brand of intellectuals that John O'Sullivan has termed "Olympians." Kenneth Minogue added that "Olympianism is the project of an intellectual elite that believes that it enjoys superior enlightenment and that its business is to spread this benefit to those living on the lower slopes of human achievement." Hence the steady stream of Court decisions striking down various restrictions on abortion, on the telecasting of sex acts, and on computer-simulated child pornography; and outlawing any aspect of religion even remotely bearing on government. The Olympians' aspirations are universal. As Minogue put it: "Olympianism [is] a vision of human betterment to be achieved on a global scale by forging the peoples of the world into a single community based on the universal enjoyment of appropriate human rights. . . . Olympians instruct mortals, they do not obey them."

It is hardly surprising, then, that Linda Greenhouse would write in the *New York Times* with complacent approval that "justices have begun to see themselves as participants in a worldwide constitutional conversation." It might be more accurate to say that they see themselves as participants in a worldwide constitutional convention. Constitutions, ours and others', are being remade without reference to the principles actually embodied in them. It seems highly unlikely, to say the least, that the meaning of our Constitution, created by Americans primarily in the 18th and 19th centuries, should turn out to be the cultural fads of Frenchmen and Germans today.

The justices now regard themselves as statesmen. Justice O'Connor, referring to a 2002 decision holding the execution of a mentally retarded man unconstitutional, said that the Court took note of the world community's overwhelming disapproval of the practice. She said that the "impressions we create in this world are important." She went on to say that the Court found influential an amicus brief filed by American diplomats discussing the difficulties they confront in their foreign missions because of U.S. death-penalty practices. Of course, the European elites are enraged by any death penalty, which means the diplomats will continue to be vexed so long as the federal or any state government has capital punishment. Logically applied, as one must hope it will not be, this should mean that concern for the good opinion of Europeans and the comfort of our diplomats would persuade the Court to declare the death penalty unconstitutional altogether, despite the fact that the Constitution several times explicitly recognizes the availability of that punishment.

A "worldwide constitutional conversation" means that the rest of the world should learn from us as well as we from them. But they may be learning the wrong lessons: I have heard alarming

Mr. Bork is the author most recently of *Coercing Virtue: The Worldwide Rule of Judges*.

reports that European judges are earnestly inquiring how Chief Justice John Marshall managed to centralize power in the federal government in order to learn how they could better diminish the remaining independence of the European Union's more fractious member states.

Our federal courts of appeals have now taken up the task of instructing the peoples of the world in "appropriate human rights." The Alien Tort Claims Act, adopted in 1789, permits aliens to sue in federal courts for torts committed in violation of the law of nations. The law of nations, back then, referred to relations between sovereign states, including the safety of ambassadors, and to piracy. Human rights were not a part of that law. For the most part, this area of law lay dormant for almost two centuries—until it was suddenly resurrected and expanded by a court of appeals that ruled that a suit for damages could be brought here in the U.S. *for the murder by a Paraguayan of a Paraguayan in Paraguay.*

The court, as Prof. Jeremy Rabkin put it, "cheered on by a host of international law scholars, insisted . . . that 'customary international law' has greatly expanded and now incorporates an international law of human rights." There are now many such suits, including one in which it is alleged to be a violation of the law of nations when an American company refuses to bargain collectively with its workers in a foreign country.

The courts that countenance such lawsuits are making up the law of nations out of their own notions of appropriate human rights. They are undertaking to instruct the world on how the citizens of all nations must behave. This modern abuse of the Alien Tort Claims Act is judicial imperialism—indeed moral presumption—at its highest pitch. The Supreme Court has yet to deal with this misuse of the statute, and it's not clear what it will do about it; but in the meantime our lower-court Olympians are preaching their morality to the world.

THE ARROGANCE OF POWER

What these courts are doing closely resembles Belgium's concept of "universal jurisdiction," under which its courts were asserting the authority to try criminally people involved in actions that have no connection to Belgium. A Belgian court tried and convicted Rwandan nuns for their actions during a massacre in Rwanda. The Belgian Supreme Court ruled in 2002 that Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon may be tried after he leaves office for alleged war crimes in Lebanon 20 years earlier when he was head of Israel's army. Since massacres by Arabs are not prosecuted, it is difficult to disagree with Israelis who see anti-Semitism as an explanation for the difference. That is to be expected. International law in its higher reaches is usually heavily biased and political. As the Muslim populations of continental European nations rapidly increase, it is also to be expected that biased rulings will run heavily against Israel and the U.S. On the evidence of their behavior in the Pinochet affair, the United Kingdom and Spain

may be adopting a version of universal jurisdiction.

International-law specialists David Rivkin and Lee Casey have remarked that the modern notion of universal jurisdiction would "permit the courts of any state to prosecute and punish the leadership of any other state for violations of international humanitarian norms." But "proponents should keep in mind that any independent state, not just 'right thinking' Western ones, would be entitled to prosecute." Yugoslavian courts convicted the NATO leaders for the 1999 bombing of Serbia, and Bill Clinton (tried in absentia, of course) was sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment.

To say, as Justice O'Connor did, that "the differences between our nations are fewer and less important than our similarities" is a serious mistake. We have few ideas about law and human rights in common with radical Islam, Russia, China, most of Africa, Cuba, and much of South America. The "impressions we create in [the] world" by abandoning our Constitution may be favorable in Europe, but that is all. Nor is there any good reason to cultivate the good will of European elites by importing their vapid notions of advanced social policy to replace the principles of our Constitution.

We have experimented with bringing into our universities neo-Marxist, feminist, and post-modernist philosophies, primarily out of Germany and France. The result has been wreckage in the study of the humanities. Why anyone would want to replicate that experience in law, as some judges, professors, and interest groups do, is a subject for the study of intellectual pathologies. Postmodern-

ism has been defined as an uneasy alliance between nihilism and the politics of the Left. Radical individualism, which denies the possibility of objective moral standards, is a version of nihilism and the Court's social doctrine, now supplemented by foreign—primarily European—judicial decisions, has steadily moved our culture to the left.

Something larger than the justices' vulnerability to foreign law is in play. Internationalism is all the rage among Olympians. A heavy admixture of internationalism is urged as essential in our foreign policy and our employment of armed force. That may be seen in the proliferation of international tribunals such as the European Court of Human Rights and—more recently, and more ominously—the International Criminal Court, which intends to judge the behavior of citizens of all nations, even those that have not ratified the treaty establishing the court. Many Americans and most Europeans appear to think that morality requires submission of U.S. military responses to threats abroad to the United Nations and its Security Council. The result of these extreme forms of internationalism can only be a serious reduction of our sovereignty and our freedom. In large part, that is precisely what is intended by internationalism's enthusiasts, foreign and domestic. Consciously intended or not, it will also be the tendency of the internationalization of American law by American judges. That ought to be resisted strenuously, in the law as elsewhere. **NR**



Another international tribunal in action

the long view

ROB LONG

From *Larry King Live*, November 25, 1703

LARRY KING: "Hello, caller from Old Salem Turnpike. You're on with Chief Wild Turkey of the Annisquam Tribe."

CALLER: "Am I on?"

LARRY KING: "What's your question, caller?"

CALLER: "Well, first, I'd like to say hi to all of my friends in Salem and Pride's Crossing!"

LARRY KING: "Do you have a question?"

CALLER: "Yeah, I'd like to ask the chief, I mean with all due respect, what's his people's problem with us? I mean, we've been here for a few years and it seems like no matter what we do, they're all, 'Go home to England' or whatever, and we're all, 'Hey, this is our home,' and so, like, nothing ever gets solved or anything. I mean, what's the dealio?"

LARRY KING: "You don't want us here? Is that right, Chief?"

CHIEF WILD TURKEY: "You know what, Larry? That's just a crude caricature of our views. That's not what we're saying."

LARRY KING: "But that's what we're hearing, am I right, caller?"

CALLER: "Totally. I mean, I was born here, okay? You're all, 'Go home,' and I'm like, 'Hey, I'm from Cape Ann, okay?' And if I, like, venture off the Boston Post Road for like one second or whatever, I'm like totally attacked and skinned alive by Indians."

CHIEF WILD TURKEY: "Okay, that's just racist."

CALLER: "It so totally is not! It happened

to a buddy of mine in 1698. And our minister was attacked in his home—in his home, Larry—and his wife and daughter were carried off and like, totally befouled or whatever."

CHIEF WILD TURKEY: "I admit when your people first came to our land—oh, what was it? Ten years ago? Twenty years ago?—we were understandably upset. I think under the circumstances that's not unusual. And in the past—and, Larry, I cannot stress enough that this is the past I'm talking about—in the past there have been regrettable acts of violence on both sides—"

CALLER: "That's so not true—"

CHIEF WILD TURKEY: "... but we're moving on—"

CALLER: "They cut off a candlemaker's ear last week, Larry. The dude is like, traumatized or whatever—"

CHIEF WILD TURKEY: "Well, if you'll let me finish—can I finish please?—you can read it for yourself in my book—"

LARRY KING: "Which is?"

CHIEF WILD TURKEY: "*It Takes a Tribe: A Warrior Speaks for Peace*, which is available pretty much everywhere—"

LARRY KING: "New Cambridge! You're on with Chief Wild Turkey! Hello!"

CALLER: "Hi, Larry. And greetings to you, Chief Wild Turkey."

CHIEF WILD TURKEY: "Hello."

CALLER: "Larry, first I'd like to state for the record that I have studied the ways and nature of our friends—and I think of them as friends, Larry, not as 'savages' or 'heathen' or any of the other words that certain narrow-minded right-wing people like to use."

LARRY KING: "What do you like to be called, Chief? Red devils? Naked

Indians?"

CALLER: "Larry, that is so racist."

CHIEF WILD TURKEY: "Thank you, caller. We like to be called by our tribal name. I'm not sure I know why this is so hard. Call me an Annisquam."

CALLER: "Larry, if I could, I'd like to alert your audience to something we're doing here at the college. I teach here in New Cambridge, right across the river from Boston Town. And what we're doing this Thursday is having what we're calling a 'Feast of Reconciliation' with our friends—and we call them 'friends,' Larry, because that's exactly how we think of them, okay?—from the various tribal communities in the region of Boston Town. It's open to everyone. Please just come down to the sheep's meadow with a warm, covered dish and a commitment to building a diverse, peaceful community. This is our second anniversary of doing this, Larry, and we're hoping to make it a tradition."

CHIEF WILD TURKEY: "It's an excellent event."

LARRY KING: "You did this last year?"

CALLER: "Yes, we did, Larry, and it was just terrific. Really healing and positive and just a great chance to reach out to our neighbors. And I call them 'neighbors,' Larry, because that's exactly how I think of them."

LARRY KING: "This Thursday?"

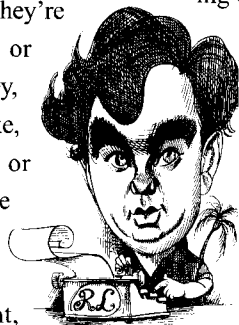
CHIEF WILD TURKEY: "Right. Right. Just come on down. And bring the kids. Last year we had lots and lots of children there and it was just wonderful."

LARRY KING: "The kids were okay?"

CHIEF WILD TURKEY: "Not just okay. They were positively delicious. Especially with apple sauce."

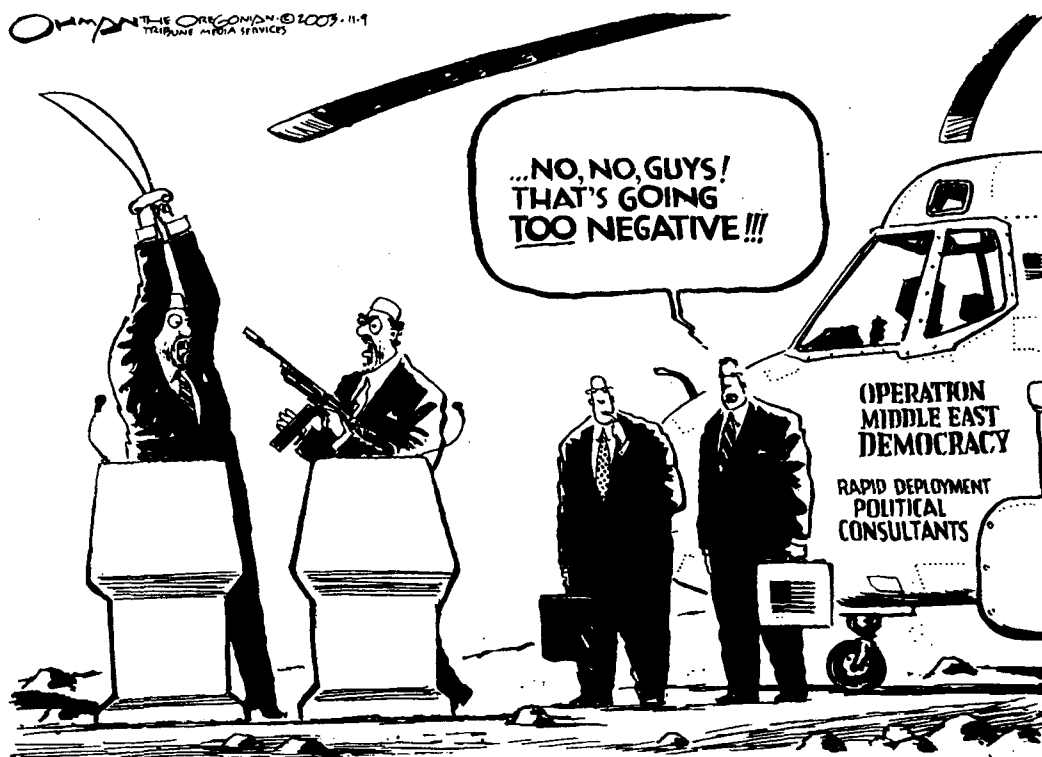
CALLER: "Larry, I'm not saying there aren't cultural differences to celebrate, okay?"

LARRY KING: "Tomorrow! The Laci Peterson Witch Trial!"



HELD

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THE HOUSE OF SAUD

*With palaces like Kubla Khan's
For, say, 5,000 princes,
Bin Laden's bombs shook chandeliers
And triggered royal wincings,
Recalling Antoinette when she
Peered anxiously at Louis,
Observing in her awful French:
"So now we go ker-flooie."*

—W. H. VON DREELE



"HEY, MOM! YOU SURE THERE ARE NO SIDE EFFECTS FROM CLONED FOOD?!"

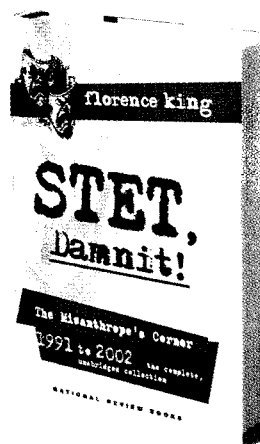
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"I'm a conservative, and he's a neo-conservative."



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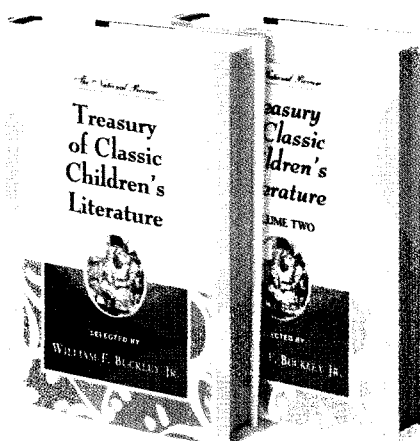


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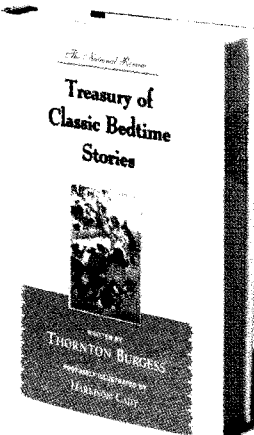
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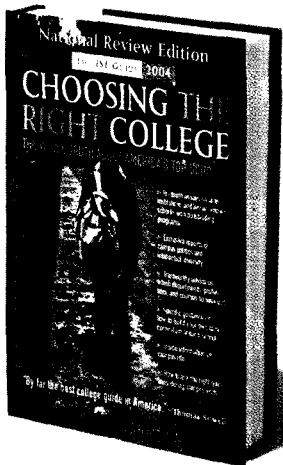
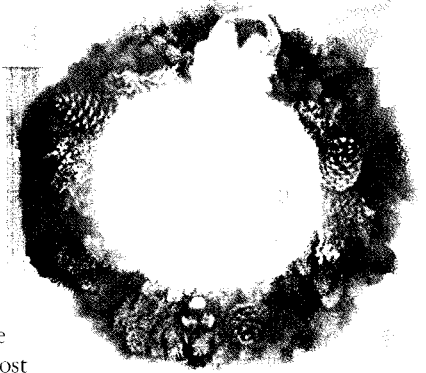
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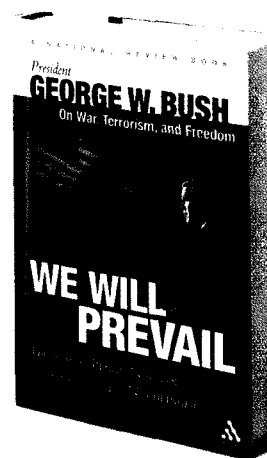
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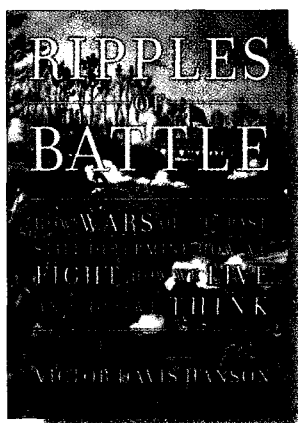
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Nike's Apostle



Ripples of Battle: How Wars of the Past Still Determine How We Fight, How We Live, and How We Think,
by Victor Davis Hanson
(Doubleday, 278 pp., \$27.50)

JEFFREY HART

VICTOR DAVIS HANSON is the only modern writer I know with the sensibility of an ancient Greek: He, like Homer, is implacable. In his remarkable *Carnage and Culture* (2001), a mind-opening work, we are with Herodotus—an artist of gentler effects than the *Iliad*, because of his philosophical distance. With *Ripples of Battle*, though, we are *there*: on that concentrated and all but indescribable, except by Homer, plain between Troy and the cobalt sea.

Herodotus taught his lesson throughout his *History*, but especially in Book VII: Free men are better warriors, and usually win against warriors who are essentially slaves. Hanson explains the same thing, a bit more analytically for us slow learners and sentimental multiculturalists: Hellas over the mass armies of Darius and Xerxes, Rome over Carthage, which it (N.B.) annihilated, Europe over Islam and the Sultan (Poitiers, Lepanto), Cortez over Montezuma and the Aztecs (Mexico

City), the U.S. over Japan. This scenario echoes through Western literature. Milton's Satan and his hordes appear as the sultan and his; the heroic Christ defeats them, with heroic power, and it helps that, like the West, He has artillery and Satan does not.

Herodotus, one of Hanson's models, relates a conversation between Demaratus the Greek and Xerxes in the Persian camp before Salamis. The great king asks Demaratus how he thinks the Persians will do.

"My Lord," Demaratus replied, "is it a true answer you would like, or merely an agreeable one?"

"Tell me the truth," said the King, "and I promise that you will not suffer by it." . . .

"[The Greeks] fighting singly . . . are as good as any, but fighting together they are the best soldiers in the world. They are free, but not entirely free; for they have a master, and that master is Law, which they fear much more than your subjects fear you. Whatever this master commands, they do; and his command never varies: It is never to retreat in battle, however great the odds, and always to stand firm, and to conquer or die. If, my Lord, you think what I have said is nonsense, very well; I am willing henceforward to hold my tongue."

Xerxes broke out laughing at Demaratus' answer, and good-humoredly let him go.

Free men freely obey the laws because they have a voice in making them. They tell the truth to their superiors without fear. They are inventive, contentious. They are property owners. Xerxes had to assure Demaratus that he would not, at very least, have his tongue cut out, and what he heard was probably the first truth he had heard in years. Similarly, as Hanson shows in *Carnage*, disaster awaited the Japanese navy at Midway because Yamamoto's admirals could not tell him that his plans for the battle stank: Yamamoto was the Emperor's deputy.

With *Ripples of War* we are up close—in the battles, as in the *Iliad*. The theme is battle itself and its ramifying effects; Hanson's mind is part of the sub-zero cold

world of the late Bronze Age, the Age of Achilles, around 1250 B.C. You yourself may not be ready for this Arctic chill. It is said that Cheney likes to talk with Hanson.

Ilium, or Troy, is part of Homer's universal cycle of destruction, as is the warrior, as are all cities. Achilles is the "destroyer of cities." The *Iliad*—so named by Herodotus; it could have been the *Achillead*—begins, "Rage—Goddess, sing the rage of Peleus' son Achilles." In this Bronze Age world, only women and children weep. When Achilles wades through slaughtered Trojans and is about to plunge his sword into Laocoön, who shows fear, Achilles' words are pitiless: "Come, friend, you too must die. Why moan about it so? Even Patroclus died, a far, far better man than you. And look, you see how handsome and powerful I am? The son of a great man, the mother who gave me life a deathless goddess. But even for me, I tell you, death and strong force of fate are waiting." The only light in this world is nobility according to the code of *areté*, and the beauty of artifacts: the glint of the sun on Achilles' bronze armor, the great funeral pyre at a hero's death, and the immortal songs sung by the poets, like Pindar and Homer.

Hanson's excellent book demonstrates that war is always war, its Bronze Age chill no less palpable at Shiloh in 1862 than it had been on Homer's plain. After the first disastrous day, Grant said that you could walk across the field of battle and never touch ground, so thick were the corpses, whole or shot to pieces, and sunk in the mud. In the evening, Sherman, who had been badly wounded and had two horses shot from under him, said to Grant, "Well, Grant, we've had the Devil's own day, haven't we?" "Yes," said Grant. "Lick 'em tomorrow." Grant was implacable, Sherman not quite: The nihilism of the battlefield nauseated him. He resolved to keep casualties at an absolute minimum. Hanson writes that Sherman's "odyssey through the South" was a spiritual journey, one that had begun "with his wounds and lost mounts at Shiloh." And the field of corpses.

Sherman destroyed the infrastructure of

the Confederacy, not its armies, and launched the huge pincer that came up on Lee from the south and won the war. Hanson thinks that thereafter, the United States sought—to the extent it could—to destroy property, not people. In his discussion of Okinawa (1945), Hanson returns to this question of avoiding casualties. The Japanese, he writes, had a simple plan: kill so many Americans, and destroy so many of their ships and planes, “that the United States—both its stunned military and its grieving citizens back home—would never wish to undergo such an ordeal again.” The Japanese strategy actually worked. Our losses on Okinawa were catastrophic, with the result that there would indeed be no invasion of the home islands of Japan. But the strategy elicited an equally creative response—Hiroshima and Nagasaki, of course, but also the fire-bombing of Tokyo and other cities:

The always deadly inventive Gen. Curtis LeMay was ready on his own to use air-power in radically new ways to avoid American casualties. In response to the horrific losses on Okinawa, he was carefully assembling a monstrous fleet of B-29s—perhaps eventually 5,000 in number—to be augmented by 5,000 B-24s and B-17s transferred from the European theater, with the possibility that over a thousand British Lancaster bombers and their seasoned crews would join the armada as well! That rain of napalm to come from a nightmarish fleet

of 10,000 or more bombers on short missions from Okinawa would have made both atomic bombs seem child’s play in comparison. The fire raids on March 11, 1945, alone killed more than died at Hiroshima, and were followed by far more destruction—perhaps 500,000 incinerated in all by the subsequent bombing—than occurred at Nagasaki.

Hanson faces war’s reality in a direct, Greek manner. Augustus Saint-Gaudens also caught it perfectly, in his great statue of Sherman on New York’s Fifth Avenue: Sherman and his horse, led by Nike, the goddess of victory, look down that great Avenue to Stanford White’s Roman arch in honor of George Washington. Look at Nike. Her eyes are wide open, expressionless. Far beyond cruelty: a Greek goddess. Sherman’s prancing horse walks over the pine cones and leafy fronds of a Confederacy that, like the Japanese Empire, would not rise again, but join Persia and Carthage, the Aztecs and the Sultan, totally eliminated from history.

Bin Laden should read this book. He is playing 10th-century Arab—and does not understand, not for an instant. Poor fool. The “bomb” of 9/11 was a homemade firecracker compared with the products of Western freedom and ingenuity. Another attack on our civilians—bomb, anthrax, whatever—and he and the rest could be out there in the frozen galactic spaces. Hanson knows this, hints at it; Nike’s cold eyes are gazing still. **NR**

GOING TO HEAVEN

She went on her knees in the dirt
thinking of nothing
lost in the crumbling blackness
kneeling above her shadow
preparing a place for bulbs
and the few seeds held in the palm of her hand.

Now gladiolus rises everywhere
perfect in sunlight
spreading straight green wings into the air
and green curls in the shade
that will be eaten.

And I have dug steps in the dark earth
that we may descend to them.

—ROBERT MEZEY

The Axeman Cometh



Rumsfeld: A Personal Portrait,
by Midge Decter
(Regan, 240 pp., \$24.95)

JAMES S. ROBBINS

IN the summer of 2001, the smart money in Washington was betting that Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld would be the first member of the Bush cabinet to resign. There was rumored to be a Pentagon pool on the date of his departure; but, to quote the subject of Midge Decter’s new book, “The only thing we know for certain is that it is unlikely that any of us knows what is likely.” A few months later, convinced feminists were calling him “Rumstud,” and optometrists were selling out of the rimless frames he had made a fashion statement to middle-aged executives yearning for mojo by association.

This slim, quick-reading volume provides a glimpse of this extraordinary man. It does not pretend to be a comprehensive biography, and in some respects is very cursory. One gets mere hints of his spirit as athlete and adventurer. He was a champion wrestler and naval aviator, ran with the bulls at Pamplona, and once—as a congressman—apprehended a fleeing criminal. Age never dampened

Mr. Robbins is a national-security analyst and a contributor to National Review Online.

books, arts & manners

his physical courage, and Rumsfeld famously dashed from his office on 9/11 to tend to the injured.

When he was called upon to return to the Pentagon in 2001, he had nothing to prove. Life, as he said, was good. He had accomplished more than most men will in their professional lives, and was past the age when many would have retired. In the 1960s he was a four-term congressman, who—as leader of a group of Young Turks (“Rumsfeld’s Raiders”)—helped secure Gerald Ford’s ascent to the office of minority leader; Ford later made Rumsfeld the youngest secretary of defense in history. In 1977, he became CEO of the Searle pharmaceutical company—where he became known as “The Axeman,” a pitiless downsizer who fired employees and sold off unprofitable assets. When he arrived, Searle stock sold for \$10; several years later Monsanto bought the company for \$65 per share. It was a great achievement for a businessman who had started out as an assistant watermelon seller.

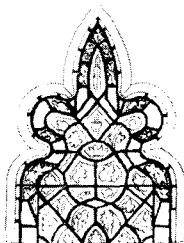
The Pentagon Rumsfeld inherited in 2001 was badly in need of reform. For the Clinton administration, it had been bureaucratic dumping ground; lack of leadership had allowed the department to fragment into its numerous tribes. The acquisition system was weakened by politics, and promotions were marked by cronyism. Congressional controls and oversight requirements had blossomed, providing a case study in Parkinson’s Law: In 1975, the Defense Authorization Bill was 75 pages, but by 2001 it had grown to 988, even though defense manpower was down by a third and defense outlays as a percentage of GDP had declined by 40 percent.

Furthermore, for all the money being spent on defense, there was no clear national strategy. Rumsfeld turned to Andrew Marshall, longtime head of the Pentagon Office of Net Assessment, who had impressed him in his first tour in the 1970s. Marshall produced a strategic vision that highlighted the need for joint war-fighting, expeditionary forces, flexibility, and technological adaptability—emphasizing networks over weapons

platforms, precision effects over big-ticket programs. The overarching concept was Defense Transformation, a means of reconceptualizing threat assessment and balancing risks with resources to cope with a rapidly changing global security environment.

Unfortunately, the Department of Defense is not Searle pharmaceuticals. The virtues of private-sector management are, in the public sector, considered deadly sins. The Axeman faced employees he could not fire, assets he could not sell off, a dysfunctional board of directors (namely, Congress), and no threat of bankruptcy to discipline the process. His first eight months on the job were frustrating, or so it was reported. The *New York Times* ran a story averring that “Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld . . . was declaring war on bureaucracy in the Pentagon”—this in the morning edition of September 11, 2001.

The terror attacks that day gave Rumsfeld the opportunity to sidestep bureaucratic channels and test Transformation directly on the battlefield. On orders of the president, he began to plan the first 21st-century war. Looking at Rumsfeld’s history, one understands how he was able quickly to conceptualize the scope of the effort necessary to meet the



terrorist threat. His views are marked by an unstrained consistency in policy positions, derived from basic principles: peace through strength, loyalty to friends, and certain punishment for transgressors. After the 1985 hijacking of the cruise ship *Achille Lauro*, during which disabled American Leon Klinghoffer was shot in his wheelchair and thrown overboard, Rumsfeld made a speech in which he called terrorism a form of “outright warfare” that the U.S. should take immediate steps to deter. He advocated attacking terrorists on their home ground, rather than allowing them to choose their own targets. His words were prophetic, but it took 9/11 to prove the point.

It is an improbable historical coincidence that Rumsfeld was in the ideal position to put his 16-year-old strategic framework into action. The nine-week war in Afghanistan silenced many of his former critics, particularly those who preemptively uttered the word “quag-

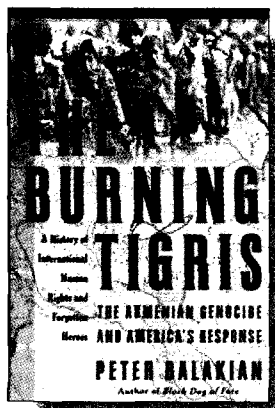
mire.” Throughout the book Decter takes a certain pleasure in reprinting quotes that pundits wish they had never made.

Beyond validating the Transformation paradigm, the war also made Rumsfeld a star. Millions would tune in to his Pentagon briefings, a startling fact when you think about it: Did anyone set his VCR to catch Les Aspin? His speaking style is artful and direct, precise without being wooden. His turns of phrase are witty and unexpectedly philosophical, especially compared with most discourse in relentlessly wonkish and humorless Washington. The collection of aphorisms known as “Rumsfeld’s Rules” should be required reading for anyone pursuing a career in government or business. He reached a pinnacle of sorts when, in November 2002, *People* magazine declared him a sex symbol. Pretty good for a 70-year-old grandfather of six. And Decter points out that he could be thought a “studmuffin” for the very reason Bill Clinton could not: He was not self-conscious about it, he did not seek it, and deep down he did not care. Clinton had the charm of the seducer. Decter describes the essence of Rumsfeld’s charisma as “manliness.”

This book is a very affecting personal portrait, though it’s a bit of a shame that the author does not insert herself much into the narrative. She makes her presence felt more in the acuity of her insights—she observes, for example, that French opposition to war in Iraq but not in Afghanistan may be explained by the fact that the former was an expression of American strength, and that the latter arose from American weakness. She also offers a good explanation of the difference between power and celebrity—power being essentially something that exudes from within, celebrity being a projection of the celebrants.

As Decter’s excellent book makes clear, Rumsfeld is a man of power, not celebrity. The media, with their passion for manufacturing story lines, seek new and interesting wrestling matches: Rumsfeld vs. Powell; Rumsfeld vs. Tenet; Rumsfeld vs. Rice. But as Rumsfeld himself says, “If you are not criticized, you may not be doing much.” And it is noteworthy that in these purported matchups he always gets top billing. **NR**

Remembering Genocide



The Burning Tigris: The Armenian Genocide and America's Response, by Peter Balakian (HarperCollins, 496 pp., \$26.95)

DAVID PRYCE-JONES

THE fate of the Armenian people has been as cruel as any. Between 1890 and 1915, in a series of increasingly bloody convulsions, the Ottoman Turks came close to exterminating the Armenians then in their empire. The Turks resorted to every brutality, including death marches and deportation, at the same time robbing their victims of everything. A few hundred thousand Armenians survived in exile, but somewhere in the order of 1.5 million were murdered. This attempted genocide introduced the 20th century of Lenin, Stalin, and Hitler.

At first glance, the atrocity seems to exemplify the cautionary wisdom that man is a wolf to man, as the Romans were the first to say. More profoundly, the novel ideology of nationalism was sweeping in from Europe to disrupt the settled life of the Ottoman Empire, and call into question the identity of all its peoples. The empire had long been pluralist, in its unique manner. Muslims were of course supreme, and the ruling sultan spoke for them. But minorities had their own communal structures to safeguard ethnic identity and religious faith. Christian though they were, the

Armenians had been particularly successful under this ramshackle system, proud to be known as "the loyal community," industrious and prospering.

Greeks, Serbs, Bulgarians, and Romanians were among the other Christian communities accustomed to Ottoman pluralism. These peoples all had an original country they could think of as their own. An unusual coalition in the West of nationalist agitators, romantics, and Christian missionaries incited them to rebel against the Ottomans. Successive wars of liberation gave them their independence.

Armenians joined the queue of would-be nations late in the day. Scattered throughout Turkey, they had no territory there that they could call their own. Half the nation or more lived in historic Armenia, on the far side of the Russian border as subjects of the czar. Imitating the European model, Armenian intellectuals formed secret societies, and they were willing to practice terror in pursuit of their national aims. The reigning sultan, Abdul Hamid, was limited but crafty. To him, the Armenians were Christian wreckers and agents of foreign powers, and he was determined to stop them by whatever means he could and preserve the dwindling empire. Overthrowing the sultan in 1909, the Young Turks explosively combined old-style Muslim fanaticism and new-style nationalism.

Peter Balakian gives a thoroughly researched and sober account of the atrocities as they unfolded. The Armenians

Somewhere in the order of 1.5 million Armenians were murdered. This introduced the 20th century of Lenin, Stalin, and Hitler.

were of course directly the victims of the Turks and in particular the Kurds among whom they had lived closely. Indirectly, however, they were victims of their own intellectuals. How were law-abiding and loyal people of their sort to defend themselves against those passionately working to turn them into the fodder of a nationalist and revolutionary cause? Acts of terrorism by a small number of Armenians enraged the Turks; then, early in World War I, a volunteer division of Armenians in Russian uniform invaded Turkey outright. The Young Turks reacted with a fatal and indefensible step, the final solution of genocide. In the death throes

of the Ottoman Empire, Armenian nationalism had proved suicidal.

Throughout the years of this festering crisis, liberals of all sorts, from England's Gladstone and Lord Bryce to America's Julia Ward Howe and Clara Barton, had taken up the Armenian cause. Balakian gives a particularly valuable and absorbing account of this early example of lobbying for human rights. For the first time the phrase "crimes against humanity" was used, and it has been usual ever since to appeal to "the moral power of the United States" to save victims everywhere.

Most missionaries among the Armenians were self-sacrificing and humane people who did good work in the field, but their outlook was Christian and Western. At long range they activated journals at home, like the *Christian Herald* of New York, to raise funds and to campaign, and they appealed to the feminists of *Woman's Journal* in Boston. A number of writers took up the issue. The Armenian massacres sickened Henry James, and he wanted military intervention for the sake of the "civilization of the future." Stephen Crane likewise blamed the European powers for complicity. Bertrand Russell was to conclude eventually that the failure to stop these massacres marked a turning point in history. What Balakian calls a proto-Peace Corps soon mobilized for charity and relief work. Committees formed in the U.S., Britain, and France; one of them, the Committee on Armenian Atrocities, raised \$116

million—equivalent to over \$1 billion today. Much of this only aroused the Muslim fanaticism it hoped to mitigate.

The U.S. had an embassy and several consulates in Turkey. Henry Morgenthau was appointed ambassador in Istanbul in 1913, and had to deal with the Young Turk

government through the climax of the genocide. Leslie Davis, the surprisingly named Jesse Jackson in Aleppo, and Oscar Heizer in Trebizond were among officials who provided firsthand evidence of mass murder. Among these grim reports, one from Jackson stands out with particular foreboding, when he describes how the people of Urfa were

books, arts & manners

"butchered like sheep." Morgenthau sent this material to the State Department, and the State Department leaked it to the press.

But the genocide continued. Later, in 1917, in spite of pro-Armenian pressures—which included the powerful advocacy of Theodore Roosevelt and a number of congressmen—the U.S. did not declare war on Turkey, then Germany's ally. During the postwar peacemaking at Versailles, an American mandate for Armenia was proposed. President Woodrow Wilson, the admired champion of self-determination for small nations, wavered about it. His secretary of state, Robert Lansing, was against it, and so were the Republicans. For fear of revenge and expulsion, the missionaries now decided that it would only be prudent to propitiate the Turks. Under British auspices, some Turks were tried for war crimes, and two or three were even hanged. When Lenin collared his Armenians into a Soviet republic, and Ataturk stormed to power in Turkey, the Armenian cause seemed lost by default. And so thought Hitler, musing on the eve of his blitzkrieg on Poland: "Who today, after all, speaks of the annihilation of the Armenians?"

The world has become inured to the crimes committed in the promotion of national movements, or conversely in suppressing them. Yet after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Armenians sprang out of the rubbish bin of history to which they had been consigned, and now have a republic of their own on at least part of their historic land. That was the moment for truth and reconciliation. There were righteous Turks who had refused orders to kill Armenians, and Turkish writers who lamented what had been done in their name. Official Turkey, however, has continuously denied that there was an Armenian genocide, and still does so today. In a dignified final chapter, Balakian examines and deplores this falsification of history. Introduced into an unfamiliar society and setting, the Western concept of nationalism caused this breakdown of civilization. The Turks apparently feel ashamed, and so they still do not do justice either to the Armenians or to themselves. **NR**

Religious Fiction . . .

The Da Vinci Code,
by Dan Brown
(Doubleday, 454 pp., \$24.95)

DAVID KLINGHOFFER

WHEN a novel has stuck around the top of the *New York Times* best-seller list for half a year, there is something interesting going on. Such a book has set off a pretty loud pealing of the electric chimes at the front door of the culture. In the case of Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code*, what's so special exactly? That depends on what makes conspiracy theories so fascinating.

Brown starts out with the bizarre murder of a curator at the Louvre by an albino assassin sent, it would seem, by the Catholic religious order Opus Dei. From there we're off like a bottle rocket, as a Harvard professor of "religious symbology," Robert Langdon, who happens to be visiting Paris, is called in for a consultation with the police. For the curator, before he succumbed to his wounds, had taken off all his clothes, arranged himself and some of the nearby artwork in a most curious fashion, and daubed a cryptic message in his own blood, mentioning Langdon's name.

I don't have to tell you that a book like this needs a love interest for protagonist Langdon, whom Brown supplies in the person of Sophie Neveu, a beautiful police cryptologist. Pretty soon Langdon is himself a suspect in the murder and he and Sophie are on the run from the French law. As we learn, a mysterious group of unknown individu-

als is trying to keep uncomfortable historical truths a secret, and the albino assassin is mixed up in it.

The conspiracy theory at the heart of Dan Brown's huge bestseller was not invented by him (it has been kicking around for years), but it's a juicy one and he's made the most of it, creating a story with a very effective cliffhanger at the end of almost every one of his 105 chapters. You are pulled along relentlessly—a feat of narrative art that really does deserve to be called art, no matter what Yale literary critic Harold Bloom said recently in mocking the "immensely inadequate" Stephen King (a similarly gifted writer) when the latter won a lifetime literary prize. If you don't believe writing in this vein merits appreciation, try thinking up a plot like the one in *The Da Vinci Code* yourself.

Since Brown's novel is a novel, it can more forthrightly take advantage of the tension inherent in unlocking ancient doors that perhaps should never be opened. He's witty, succinct, and smart—though the reader will have to

be prepared to encounter the phrase "the sacred feminine" more than once, and if that makes you extremely queasy, you had better leave this book alone.

But the best thing about *The Da Vinci Code* is that the conspiracy is just an awfully neat one. What makes for an outstanding conspiracy? It doesn't have to be real, as this one is

surely not, despite Brown's inclusion of a preface boldly headlined "FACT." One requirement is a complex array of lore. Brown has that: He provides many fascinating historical and quasi-historical tidbits—like the symbolic significance of the figure of a rose, the mathematical phenomenon called the Fibonacci sequence, the ancient Hebrew coding sequence called *atbash*, and much more, with an emphasis on the cryptic meanings of the paintings and drawings of Leonardo da Vinci, all artfully woven into the plot.

Above all, a worthwhile conspiracy needs to explain something that previously you didn't know needed explaining, something also that links to a truth, or at least a pseudo-truth, of deep sig-



Mr. Klinghoffer's new book is *The Discovery of God: Abraham and the Birth of Monotheism* (Doubleday).

nificance. Again, pseudo-depth will do fine—we're talking about entertainment, after all. *The Da Vinci Code* has this.

But this book is certainly not for everyone, for the following reason. In this sort of thriller, there has to be something urgently important at stake should the conspiracy be revealed. What's at stake in *The Da Vinci Code* is nothing less than traditional Christianity itself. The Holy Grail, we are told, is not a holy cup but rather holy blood, the lineage of Jesus of Nazareth: The founder of Christianity had a daughter, Sarah, by Mary Magdalene. If true, this theory would overturn some of the central beliefs of Christians.

As a believing Jew, I certainly can't be accused of special pleading on behalf of Christian dogma. This should give me credibility when I say that this "Holy Blood" theory—of Jesus having descendants—is too nutty to merit serious consideration; any suggestion that such a fact could have been kept secret for two millennia is absurd. Brown does acknowledge that there is some merit—some truth and beauty—in Christianity; but such merit as he sees is very far from the faith of actual Christian believers. Any Christian who is offended by fiction that directly contradicts his faith should certainly avoid this book.

If I were a Christian, though, I think I would find it a little disturbing that some fellow Christians do in fact view this novel as a threat to their faith. Some Catholic magazines have published detailed refutations of *The Da Vinci Code*; that they believe this is necessary indicates that many Catholics, and many in the general reading public, are taking this book far more seriously than they ought to. This also suggests that the problems in Catholic religious education are every bit as severe as Catholic conservatives have been alleging for some time now. If the professional educators were doing their job, any believing Catholic past elementary-school age would know that Brown's book is—a total falsehood.

What about the book's influence in the broader culture? Here, I am calmed by the reflection that there's something profoundly religious about conspiracies in the first place, even fictitious ones.

Think about this next time you are at the beach in chilly weather. Though the sky is cloudy and a cold wind is up, you'll see people sitting on blankets in the sand just staring out to sea. Why? Because when you look at the ocean you get the intuition that just under the surface resides a vast hidden world of exotic, usually unseen creatures. The realization that there's all that life underneath—in some ways a mirror of our own world on dry land but in others dramatically different—is simply thrilling. It's what keeps people's eyes glued to the ocean even when there is ostensibly nothing going on out there.

This, too, is what makes a conspiracy thrilling, the revelation of concealed complexity all around. Likewise, it's what attracts many of us to thinking about spiritual matters—the gut-level perception, powerful if unproven, of an existence beyond the one of our mundane daily lives. *The Da Vinci Code* may be silly; but in its fashion, it's also thrilling. If its popularity means people are thinking about invisible realities, that's good news.

NR

... and Religious Fact

The Resurrection of the Son of God, by N. T. Wright (Fortress, 817 pp., \$39)

MICHAEL POTEIRA

THIS is unquestionably the Book of the Moment in religious studies—hailed by preachers and lay scholars, Protestant and Catholic alike—and deservedly so. It makes the forceful and persuasive argument that the resurrection of Jesus is not just historically plausible, but in fact the most plausible existing explanation of how the early Christian message came to be believed. It is that rare theological book that combines academic depth and rigor

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with a lucid style that is not just accessible, but compelling, to the average educated layman.

The problem Wright sets out to address is this. After Jesus was crucified, his followers came to the near-unanimous conclusion that he had risen from the dead. How, in the context of the Rome-dominated ancient Near East, could they have come to believe this—and how could they have persuaded others to do the same? The commonly held view among skeptical scholars today is that the disciples were using symbolic language of bodily resurrection to represent their sense of Jesus' continued importance. In short, they invented stories of Jesus' empty tomb and post-death appearances as a metaphor, of the kind that their credulous cultural world would spontaneously have generated.

To investigate how this could have happened, Wright engages in a detailed historical analysis of the thought patterns of the Hellenistic world, and of the Jewish theology of the period. But what he discovers is that the idea of a bodily resurrection, far from being an idea swirling in the cultural air and ready to be used by the Christians, was actually a dramatic innovation with virtually no popular or elite support. Not among the Greeks: "Neither in Plato nor in the major [Greek] alternatives . . . do we find any suggestion that resurrection, the return to bodily life of the dead person, was either desirable or possible." Nor among the Jews:

Israel as a whole would be vindicated [at the end of time]. But nobody imagined that any individuals had already been raised, or would be raised in advance of the great last day. There are no traditions about prophets being raised to new bodily life . . . There are no traditions about a Messiah being raised to life . . . The world of Judaism had generated, from its rich scriptural origins, a rich variety of beliefs about what happened, and would happen, to the dead. But it was quite unprepared for the new mutation that sprang up, like a totally unexpected plant, within the already well-stocked garden.



So the claims about Jesus really were, to use Paul's phrase, folly to the Greeks and a stumbling block to the Jews. If the disciples really were just trying to find metaphorical language for their religious experience, such language was in fact ready to hand in both Greek and Jewish traditions. To impress the Greeks, they could have spoken of the exaltation of Jesus' divine spirit while his body moldered in the grave; to impress the Jews, they could have said Jesus was transported up to heaven like the prophet Elijah. But what they did instead was tell a story that could not have been better calculated to offend their listeners—and to alienate them from the message. If it was a lie or a metaphor, it was one that was spectacularly ill devised for its purpose.

Which leads all but inescapably to the conclusion that the early Christians spread this message because . . . they believed it. And Wright provides hundreds of pages of gripping scriptural exegesis that proves precisely this: The writers of the New Testament, and the earliest Christians as a whole, believed with virtual unanimity that Jesus had been bodily resurrected. That they went from an impossibility to a certainty, and persisted in that certainty, strongly indicates that *something really happened*. And if we ask what it was, no more convincing answer has yet been given than the one the disciples gave from the very beginning.

This is powerful stuff, and deserves the widest possible audience. Does it "prove" the resurrection? That's the wrong question to ask, because the skeptic's standards of proof are notoriously elastic. What this book does do is force the present age to confront evidence, and to be as skeptical about dismissals of the resurrection as it is inclined to be about the resurrection itself. The audiences addressed by Peter and Paul were skeptical too—and thousands came to believe in their message. Just how good is Wright's book? Hundreds of years from now, people might remember Rowan Williams—an impressive man, and no mean theologian himself—not chiefly as a scholar or an archbishop of Canterbury, but as the man to whom this seminal book was dedicated.

NR

■ MUSIC ■

From Hilary to Bill

JAY NORDLINGER

OF the many young violinists before the public today, **Hilary Hahn** may be the most impressive. Last season, she gave a recital in Carnegie Hall that was a model of musicianship. It included a Bach partita, that composer being central to the young lady's career, thought, and satisfaction.

She has now recorded the Bach concertos, with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra conducted by Jeffrey Kahane. This is a distinguished recording—found on Deutsche Grammophon—with Hahn's playing intelligent and disciplined, as usual. But it is a little brusque: a little cold, a bit mechanical. Hahn could stand to loosen somewhat, and she probably will, as she moves beyond her 23 years. But a certain inflexibility is preferable to the thoughtless meanderings that other musicians commit.

■ Hahn may also be heard in the concerto by **Edgar Meyer**, along with that by an earlier American composer, Samuel Barber. Who is Meyer? He is on my mind because he recently participated in a concert by the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—as both double bassist and composer. He is one of the world's top performers on his instrument, and a composer of widening reputation. Meyer is not the first double bassist to achieve a greater glory: I think of the conductors Serge Koussevitzky and Zubin Mehta.

Meyer wrote his violin concerto for Hahn in 1999, and she recorded it that same year. (The disc comes from Sony.) Meyer is known for his use of bluegrass and other American strains, and these are plainly heard in the concerto. Much of it may strike some as simplistic and quasi-popular. I would call it simple rather than simplistic, however, and admirable for that. The concerto bears some kinship to Barber's, actually, and even more to the

music of Aaron Copland. You can hear a little of *Appalachian Spring* in it, and of *The Tender Land*, and of *Rodeo*. What is it about American music that so speaks of the prairie? Or is that only our Coplandesque variety?

Almost certainly, the Meyer Concerto will never have a better advocate than the woman for whom it was commissioned, Hilary Hahn. She displays her purity of tone, and sure technique, and fantastic musical instincts—instincts that are buttressed by first-rate training.

On that program of the Chamber Music Society, Meyer's Trio No. 1 for Violin, Cello, and Double Bass was played (with the composer chipping in as performer too, of course). On Deutsche Grammophon, his Quintet may be heard, recorded by the Emerson String Quartet (with Meyer, once more, joining in). This work provides a neat example of Meyer's art. The opening movement is folk-like and gently lulling—almost minimalist in stretches. The second movement is jazzy and bluesy, something to set toes tapping. The third movement is mournful, and maybe just slightly Eastern (as in the Orient, not New England). The last movement is fast and squirmy: a typical closer for Meyer, and others.

How will this composer develop? It will be interesting to watch. Now 43, he is known as the American "roots" man, a miner of our musical heritage, a creator of pleasant hybrids. He can be knocked for being somewhat kitschy and sentimental, but there are worse things to be knocked for, and—as I frequently remind people—it is no sin to write music that people smile at and enjoy.

I might mention, also, that coupled with the Meyer Quintet on that recording is **Ned Rorem's** String Quartet No. 4. The Emerson String Quartet played it in New York recently, no doubt in part because we are in Rorem's 80th-birthday year, and he is being programmed liberally. The String Quartet No. 4 is written after paintings by Picasso—inspired by them—and is an excellent specimen of the Rorem sensibility and craft. All this Rorem of late has served to remind us how valuable the ol' rascal has been to the American repertory, and to music.

■ And now for something completely different (as a troupe once said): **Anna Netrebko** is an extraordinarily popular

Russian soprano, and—there should be no beating around the bush—is an extraordinary looker. She is one of the lucky few who look like a movie star and sing like . . . well, an opera star. She has proven herself at the Met (in Prokofiev's *War and Peace*), in Salzburg (Mozart's *Don Giovanni*), and in other important venues around the globe.

She has now recorded a compilation of opera arias, and, interestingly—perhaps pointedly—it includes nothing Russian. This is a wide-ranging, all-attempting performer. Her disc begins with Mozart, and it is certainly correct and commendable—but it is also on the steely side, a little unbending. At least she does nothing cutesy or cloying. Moving into the French repertoire, she sings a selection from Berlioz's *Benvenuto Cellini*, an opera that, by the way, will be presented at the Met for the first time this season. (This is an even bigger Berlioz year than it is a Rorem year—it is his 200th, not his 80th.) Anna Netrebko shows that she has a firm understanding of the French Romantic style.

She moves into bel canto with some Donizetti and some Bellini. Again, there are warmer, more inviting performers, but Netrebko's cool approach is welcome in itself, and the darkish Russian hue to the voice is alluring in this repertory. Finally, at the conclusion of the disc, she sings "Quando m'en vo," from Puccini's *La Bohème*, a famously flirty and seductive aria—not that A.N. would have to sing to seduce anyone.

■ In the field of pianists, **Lang Lang** is the big news of the day, fresh off his Carnegie Hall recital debut (on November 7). This 21-year-old Chinese phenom unquestionably has a lot of fingers, as he has proven during his brief years on the stage. It is a monster technique. But, in my judgment, he demonstrated a growing musical maturity on that Carnegie stage. He remains an incorrigible showman, and the technique is, if anything, more monster than ever, but he did some compelling things musically (even if one could not buy everything he was selling).

He may be heard in two romping con-

certos, the First of Mendelssohn and the First of Tchaikovsky (on Deutsche Grammophon). These are virtuosic, high-energy works, and Lang has nothing if not virtuosity and high energy. He will make better—more satisfying—recordings than this one. But, as a Portrait of the Artist as a Young, Uncontainable Man, it will do.

■ Finally, I give you a novelty—a novelty both musical and political. PentaTone Classics has produced a CD designed to nauseate the political conservative. It features Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* and a new work, by the French composer **Jean-Pascal Beintus**, called *Wolf Tracks*. (These are performed by the Russian National Orchestra, conducted by the Californian Kent Nagano.) *Peter and the Wolf* has a narrator, of course, and that is **Sophia Loren**. But what of *Wolf Tracks*? It, too, has a narrator—**Bill Clinton**.

You see, *Wolf Tracks* is a response to the Prokofiev classic—a rather ideological response. It is "a tale," as the liner notes tell us, "that converts the image of the wolf from a fearsome creature to one that represents the imperative to cherish and protect natural resources. This is a contemporary perspective that encompasses the importance of recognizing the point of view of others,"

etc., etc. The entire project is soaked in PC. **Mikhail Gorbachev**—yes, the former general secretary—reads a "Prologue," an "Intermezzo," and an "Epilogue," all composed of banalities and platitudes. The Beintus work, in which Clinton is narrator, is almost like a parody by an unkind right-winger. It even in-

cludes an anti-smoking message. The score itself is insipid, resembling music for television, or a bad imitation of John Williams.

The bio printed for Clinton may kill you. After paragraphs of adulation, it reads, "His performance as narrator of *Wolf Tracks* combines an abiding devotion to environmental and wildlife conservation with his life-long passion for music."

But I must report, as critic, that he reads well—very well. So much talent, so much wasted.

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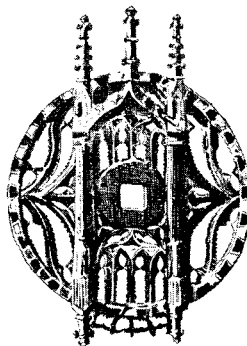
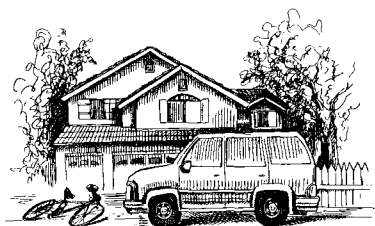


Image Conscious



JOHN DERBYSHIRE

Having asked Mr. Langton if his father and mother had sat for their pictures, which he thought it right for each generation of a family to do, and being told they had opposed it, he said, "Sir, among the anfractuositities of the human mind, I know not if it may not be one, that there is a superstitious reluctance to sit for a picture."—Boswell, Life of Johnson

THE photographer's studio was in a suburban mall twenty miles away. We had to get there early, before the mall was officially open, because pets are banned during regular business hours. My wife's great discovery, you see, was a studio that will include your pet in a family portrait. Boris, our terrier mutt, is now twelve years old, older than either of the kids. They have grown up with him; he is a senior member of the family; it has not seemed right to have a studio photograph of our family taken if Boris cannot be included. This, at any rate, has been my standing argument against the idea of a family portrait, an idea my wife has been rather keen on, myself—see below—very much less so. Then she heard about this place. They take pets, too! You just have to get there before the mall opens! Suddenly my argument was without force or merit. So there we all were, peering through a drop-down metal grille at Bay Shore Mall early on Sunday morning, waiting to be let in by whichever security guard was in cahoots with the studio.

In the matter of portraiture I am at one with the Langtons. There is nothing supernatural about my own reluctance, though. It is simply that the camera is unkind to me. In person I am, as anyone will tell you, a handsome and charming fellow with a winning smile. I have penetrating dark eyes passed down (according to my mother) from a Spanish ancestor in the remote past—a fine lady who sailed over to England in a ship full of servants. My physique is of the lean, long-limbed English-aristocratic style—think Sir Edmund Hillary. If not quite movie-star material, I consider myself perfectly presentable.

In photographs, however, all this is cruelly lost. Who is he, this leering doofus with Alfred E. Neuman ears, round shoulders, and receding chin, squinting out at the world over eye-bags the size of mule panniers? Can't he afford a decent haircut? Doesn't he know how to sit? Is that supposed to be a smile, or what?

(Part of the problem here is that I cannot smile to order. It is said of ex-President Clinton that he can weep out of one eye. While I can admire this skill, I cannot emulate it. A request to give physical expression to any emotion I am not actually experiencing flips me into deer-in-headlights mode. What seems astonishing to me is that professional photographers, even wrinkled veterans who must have decades of experience in their craft, cannot grasp the fact that anyone should be so deficient in emotional mimicry. "Come on, smile. You can do better than that, I know you can." No, I can't, you impertinent fool, just take the wretched photograph and let me get out of here.)

As badly as I fare in front of still cameras, I am simply terrible on TV. When you do a TV show nowadays the studio gives you a videotape of your appearance. I made the mistake of watching one of these once. At first I wondered if they had got my clip mixed up with some other fellow's—some mumbling, shifty-eyed creep with gray teeth, a swindler finally cornered by the network's best investigative team after a career of bilking widows out of their savings via fraudu-

lent home-improvement schemes. Then I recognized the tie, which I had spent some minutes picking out as being the one least likely to distract viewers from the enchantment of my address. I consulted a neighbor who I knew had watched the show. How had I done? There was an ominous pause. "Well, John," he said at last, "you are allowed to look into the camera, you know . . ." I have now made eight or nine TV appearances, but I cannot help noticing that I have never been invited back for a second appearance on any show.

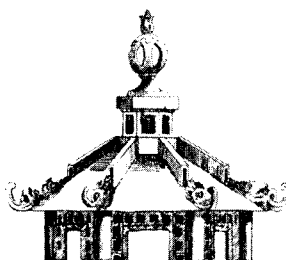
In these respects I believe I am a throwback. If you watch movie news clips from 40 or 50 years ago, the non-professionals on screen are presentationally incompetent. They fidget, look everywhere but at the lens, trip over their tongues. Nowadays, by contrast, your man in the street, interrupted in his daily round by a film crew seeking his opinion on some political issue, or an eyewitness account of some nearby calamity, is more poised and articulate than Walter Cronkite. Some things we learn individually; some things we learn as a species, like pigeons knowing to get out of the way of automobiles. I am the pigeon who gets flattened.

This particular episode ended less badly than most. The photographer was brisk and did not demand more than I can give. Boris behaved himself decorously, as becomes the maturity of his years. The kids stopped assaulting each other for just long enough to register

on photographic emulsion, and my wife was her composed self, picture and person identical in sweet integrity. I am going to do my best to like the results. At the kids' urging I have scanned them into cyberspace, so our collective image is now part of

the great ballooning mass of binary digits by which our whole world is being captured, logged, recorded, in a form that might in theory last till the end of time. What possible use or interest my picture might have for posterity, I cannot imagine, but there it is in all its cruel misrepresentation, should any 41st-century inquirer seek it. I am a squinting doofus with a bad haircut, for all eternity.

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WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

A Longer Look at Chinook

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 4

LET'S say the obvious by acknowledging that it is obvious. If my son had been killed on that Chinook helicopter, the loss would have destroyed my life, and his mother's. Destroyed is the word one uses when enduring calamitous losses. Though in fact one does endure such losses. Consider Jackie Kennedy. She survived it; so will the mothers, fathers, and spouses of the victims of the Fallujah missile.

What is one shade less than absolutely predictable is whether our foreign policy will survive that anti-helicopter missile. What happened during the Tet offensive in Vietnam in 1968 was categorically different from what happened in Fallujah. The Tet offensive in fact failed. And it was a major, concerted offensive aimed at, no less, a hundred targets. The North Vietnamese didn't prevail over the South Vietnamese, but they can be said to have prevailed over U.S. policy. After Tet, the way was paved for the retreat of 1972 and the surrender of 1975.

Fallujah has been called by one observer "the battlefield of all Iraq." It is perhaps the central stronghold of Saddamization. The papers depict youth there throwing rocks at U.S. military tanks and trucks, and shouting out their joy at the news of Americans dead. One's instinct is to curse the moral cretins and to remove from them further occasions of pleasure by shipping U.S. military out of their sights. They can't hit U.S. helicopters flying over . . . what? The Appalachians? Iowa? But the idea is that U.S. aircraft should be safe wherever they fly, and we are in Iraq because of its infestation. You cannot fly safely there, the reason being a Stalinist dictatorship of which Fallujah was a flower before the youth captured



on camera throwing stones were even conceived. It is not fair, and certainly not wise, to be angry at youth who are simply doing the spastic thing: firing at U.S. soldiers because they are "foreign," and safer to throw stones at than it ever was to have thrown stones at their indigenous oppressors. These Baathist emissaries taught them how to think and to react, and deadened their sensibilities to the meaning for them of U.S. liberation. To get perspective, recall pictures of Muscovites weeping on hearing that Stalin was dead.

The problem in Iraq derives from 500,000 Iraqis trained by Saddam to fire missiles. Not all of them are proficient at it, and the great majority would not want to fire them against Americans. But the diehards are numerous enough to threaten targets, whether American or native. Baghdad is unsafe for Iraqi patriots who are willing to undertake civic responsibilities. And low-flying aircraft are unsafe—the Chinooks are now flying only at night. And the Baghdad airport, though rebuilt, is closed to most commercial traffic. The Sunni triangle is a hotbed. Tranquility will come only after major developments, among them the training of a new Iraqi army and a consolidation of a plausible Iraqi government which will engender loyalty from Shiites, Sunnis, and Kurds.

That clearly takes time. However dramatic the loss of the helicopter, and the loss every day of American lives, there is no alternative but to look at the figures in perspective. Our casualties since the beginning of the war have reached 400. Last year, 16,000 Americans were murdered within the boundaries of the United States. That same year, 43,000 Americans were killed in automobile accidents.

If surveillance of the Iraqi theater were to end today, and begin again when Iraq is a settled state, governed by its own people making their way toward freedom, it is inconceivable that the losses sustained during the hiatus would appear to Americans as disproportion-

ate to the ends achieved. What's needed is to nurture that moral perspective which the idiot children of Fallujah were deprived of.

God and Man at Bay

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 7

THE bill proscribing partial-birth abortions threw off lights, intended and not intended. There was the decision by the White House to give the signing of the new law maximum attention. Accordingly, leading lights in the pro-life legions were there to witness the act. By obvious prearrangement, four abortionists in Lincoln, Neb., were lined up ready to petition a federal court, which granted their petition as soon as the new legislation was signed. However, the Nebraskan judge's injunction applied only to the four petitioners. It took a New York judge another day to hand down an injunction that may apply nationwide.

But the point of it was clear, that the armies of the day and of the night are engaged for one more struggle.

The friends of abortion have this time around a more difficult front to move on. It used to be relatively simple: A woman has the right to abort, or doesn't have the right. We know that such a right exists. It was procreated by the Supreme Court in 1973. But the court did not authorize abortion at the near end of fetal life, and the concentration this time around has been on abortion of a fetal substance which was seconds away from becoming an infant child, but found a guillotine in its way.

The approach of pro-choice people is to declare that any limitation on the right to abort threatens the very life of that right. And to add specifically that the act just passed fails to take into account the medical needs of the mother, and for that reason alone is defective.

Defenders of the act will argue that the language of *Roe v. Wade* does not exclude such protections as are now offered against third-trimester carnage. And of course it is somewhere between hard and impossible to make the case that the mother's health depends on abortion at that stage. Arguments to the

contrary depend on psychological readings of the mother's medical needs. Congressional argument agreed that there was simply no evidence that prospective mothers could not handle the birth of the child they had already nurtured for six months or more.

But the intensity of the quarrel goes beyond mere political affiliations. At heart, it is widely taken for granted, we have here a religious problem. It is correct that a Catholic risks mortal sin, if she engages in abortion or if he is complicit in it. But these considerations are less important as religious sanctions decline, or are attenuated. A new survey by Harris Interactive tells us that only 26 percent of Americans attend church once a week.

On a broader range, the poll tells us that religious affiliations can mean very little. It is Catholics who as a body are most conspicuously opposed to abortion, but, says this poll, 21 percent of Catholics do not believe in God (this is true of 10 percent of Protestants and 52 percent of Jews). Jews can't stop being thought of as Jews by simply ignoring the synagogue—they are still thought "Jewish." Is this also happening to Catholics? Born Catholic, but eschew the Church and its laws, renounce any belief in God—are they still going to be classified as Catholics every time Mr. Harris decides to do a poll? That seems, somehow, not right. Not right for the aspirant ex-Catholic, not right for the Roman Catholic communion.

The abortion figures tell us pretty much the same story: 1.3 million per year. Blacks are three times as likely as whites to abort, Hispanics 2.5 times as likely to abort. Twenty-seven percent of women obtaining abortions identify themselves as Catholics. There is no questionnaire, one gathers, that asks: Are you also a believing Catholic?

Seventeen Democratic senators voted for the new bill, 63 Democratic congressmen did so. It is too soon to say that pro-lifers can't be Democrats, or that pro-choicers can't be Republicans. But eleven years ago, a pro-life governor was not permitted to speak at a Democratic convention. There are those who hope that the singular atrocity of the partial-birth process, now illegalized, will liberate the Democratic party from the old absolutism.

Happily Seduced

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 11

IN the course of 24 hours, the people egging on *Master and Commander* showed me the film at a private screening, took me to dinner at the New York Yacht Club, gave me a book which tells about the making of the movie, and mailed me a DVD which includes a trailer of the movie itself and a sparkling 30-minute narrative featuring the two boats central to the film. Yes, sure, there are commercial motives: The people who brought off the heady enterprise sank \$135 million into it. But I (and others at the screening) felt a supra-material desire in our hosts that word be got out about this filming of Patrick O'Brian's work. The disinterested pleasure is on the order of the pleasure the designers of the Empire State Building got from seeing people come just to ogle at the magnificence of it.

Enthusiasm for the movie is readily communicated, because the two hours of the film are a magical distillate of the author's accomplishments in describing life at sea, at war, in great storms and long doldrums. There are the vivid satellite characters, but Captain Aubrey is the heliocentric figure, and Russell Crowe, who plays the part, has won, for this performance alone, permanent theatrical standing. He portrays a complex figure embodying the best that might be said of the seafaring commander of a British man of war, master of men and of the elements that men confront.

The entrepreneurs have gone to great pains to tell you how Peter Weir's movie was made. The literature and DVD take you inside the enterprise, tell you about the complexity of the challenge and how the filmmakers met it. This includes the tale of acquiring a vessel that lent itself to reconfiguration as a 19th-century ship of the line in Newport and sailing it (through 70-mph winds) to Baja California, and of the special training given to the actors, 50 of them stuntmen who danced about in the rigging and ran their swords into French flesh aboard the enemy ship.

Such detail is interesting—on the order of how exactly was the tornado contrived that swept Dorothy up into

Oz. There is of course the risk that curiosity at that level gets in the way of the drama effected by all these contrivances. Curiosity about how the draught was compounded that put Juliet to sleep for a day intrudes into the pathos of what happened when she awoke to find Romeo dead.

This vivisection is not a problem for those who read Patrick O'Brian's novels, great adventures in storytelling and characterization with wonderful ingenuities of plot. O'Brian wrote 20 of these, and there are those who, reaching the twentieth, go back to the first and just start the whole cycle again, as, a generation ago, some readers treated the novels of Anthony Trollope.

The sweep of the film is especially engrossing, one assumes, for those who find the sea alluring, but *Master and Commander* is studded with enough drama, poignancy, and excitement to overwhelm even the tumultuous oceans. There is a child midshipman, beautifully played, who is an aspirant naturalist. Together with Dr. Maturin, the fabled aide and friend of the captain, the kid is captivated by the sight of the least insect or lizard. These are plentifully there when the ship dallies in the Galapagos Islands. Dr. Maturin is hit by a bullet gone astray and takes over the surgical challenge of removing it, using a mirror to guide him.

From time to time the two men, the captain and the surgeon, meet in the great cabin of the master and commander to play music, a cello and violin. In a final scene of galvanizing charm, Maturin takes his cello athwartwise and strums it like a guitar, bringing to a close a film which everyone must see who has any eye for cinematic art and great adventure.

—UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



"Despotism may not be perfect, but it's still the best system anybody's come up with so far."

happy warrior

MARK STEYN

Get Smart

THE other week, a reader of Britain's *Sunday Telegraph* recounted a story. He's a British army veteran, now a helicopter pilot, who fell in love with an American. He married her, and they chose to live in the United States. He applied for a green card, but—because of the length of time the government takes to process that application—was issued in the interim an "advance parole" that would allow him to move about and conduct his business.

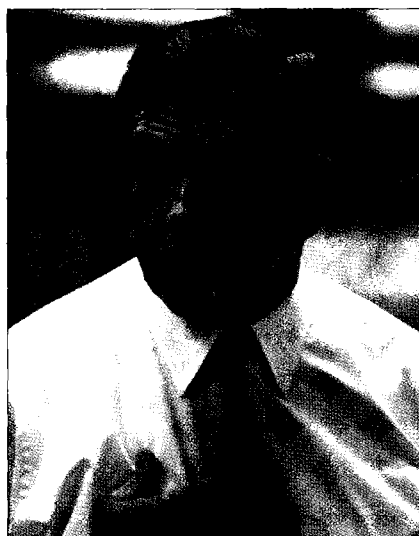
In October, this gentleman's wife had business at a trade fair in Guangzhou in southern China, and he decided to accompany her. On their return to LAX, he was informed that his "advance parole" had just expired, was handcuffed, fingerprinted, tossed in jail for 24 hours, and then told that he would be put on the first plane back to Guangzhou. Since his Chinese visa had expired, officials at Guangzhou would presumably put him on the first plane back to LAX, who would put him on the first plane back to Guangzhou, who would put him on the first plane back to LAX, and he would spend the rest of his life at 36,000 feet eating plastic food and watching Adam Sandler movies. Not our problem, said U.S. officials.

After some pleading, he was allowed to buy a \$1,000 one-way ticket to London, where he is at present. He prefers to remain anonymous because he would like, one day, to see his wife and stepdaughters again.

You may well be relaxed about such behavior by Big Government—hey, if they're doing that to British army guys, think what they must be doing to al-Qaeda members! More likely, the time and money they're expending on the above case is time and money they're not expending on Saudi flight-school students. Even if you're insouciant about a U.S. citizen's returning to her country with her spouse and having that spouse removed from her company and

expelled from the jurisdiction, it seems rather odd from an immigration agency that, as we learned after September 11, has no real idea who's in the country or what they're up to. In Britain or Australia or France, these stories mostly involve impoverished people who don't speak the language from obscure, coup-ridden banana republics. Only in America do they ensnare respectable citizens from the country's own stalwart allies.

One of the reasons America has an illegal-immigration problem is that it



Ex-military British spouses of American ladies should not be his big concern.

has a legal-immigration problem. If you do things by the book—if you go to a U.S. consulate in a foreign city and get issued an "advance parole"—you lay yourself open, for years to come, to the fate of the hapless British chap above. But if you slip across the border, rent an apartment, and get a job and a Gray Davis driver's license, the entire Democratic party and a good half of the Republican party will bend over backward to respect you as a fine, upstanding member of the Undocumented-American community and facilitate your access to all the benefits Uncle Sam has to offer. In that sense, entering the country illegally is a rational choice.

I would imagine that, in the course of

a typical year, I cross more borders than most people. While all immigration procedures can be irksome, in my experience the U.S. government is unique in the amount of effort it puts forth to entrap the law-abiding and criminalize them. An American citizen is free to marry whomsoever he chooses—Scot or Fijian, Belgian or Guatemalan—and live with that spouse in the United States, assuming that the Fijian or Belgian in question is not on the run from Interpol. In other words, as in most free societies, this is essentially an automatic, non-discretionary immigration application. It would be reassuring to think that the INS—or whatever they're calling it now—takes years to process a spousal application because they're investigating whether the Belgian applicant is wanted by the Brussels Sûreté on a pedophile charge or because the Fijian has had his Suva Municipal Council coconut-oil processing permit revoked.

But, as we know from the student visas issued to Mohamed Atta and Marwan al-Shehhi on March 11, 2002—six months to the day after they'd plowed their respective jets through the towers of the World Trade Center—the notion that anybody is undergoing an elaborate background check is a fiction. The late Mr. Atta had spent most of the previous six months front and center with his picture plastered all over the papers, but no INS clerk thought to say, "Hey, this guy has listed his place of residence as Venice, Florida, even though he's now at Big Hole in the Ground, Lower Manhattan." The only reason it takes two, four, twelve, fifteen years to process routine applications is that the bureaucracy has a minimum requirement for the thickness of dust that has settled on a file before they shuffle it from Pile A to Pile B. In the sense that his application was not approved until he was deceased, Mr. Atta may be a more poignant symbol of legal U.S. immigration than we realize.

Amnesties for the "undocumented" corrupt the integrity of American citizenship, and start at the wrong end of the problem. Look at it this way: If the INS were running Howard Dean's socialized health-care system, there'd be a ten-month waiting list to get into the maternity ward. **NR**

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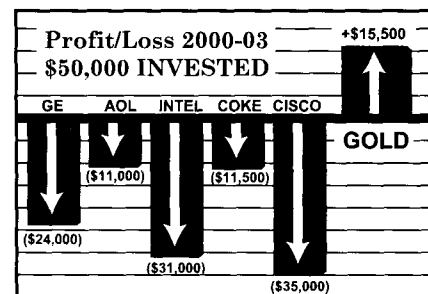
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